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THE WORKS

OF

J.-B. P. MOLIERE

VOLUME VII

TARTUFFE

AMPHITRYON

THE EDITION

COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE

ON JAPAN VELLUM PAPER

LIMITED TO TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES

No. 51

THE WORKS OF MOLIERE

TARTUFFE: OR, THE HYPOCRITE

ACT III SCENE II

ILLUSTRATIONS

MAURICE LELOIR, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

MM. LOUIS LELOIR MAURICE LELOIR JACQUES LEMAN EDMOND

THE ENTRANCE OF TARTUFFE. AS DORINE BEGINS TO DELIVER TO HIM THE MESSAGE FROM ELMIRE, TARTUFFE PULLS A HANDKERCHIEF FROM HIS POCKET AND HOLDS IT TOWARD HER, SAYING:

"FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! BEFORE YOU GO ANY FARTHER TAKE THIS HANDKERCHIEF, I PRAY."

DORINE: "FOR WHAT?"

TARTUFFE: "COVER THIS BOSOM, WHICH I CANNOT BEAR TO SEE. THE SPIRIT IS OFFENDED BY SUCH SIGHTS, AND THEY EVOKE SINFUL THOUGHTS."

DORINE, WITH THE HONESTY OF HER PLAIN SPEAKING, HEAD HIGH, AND LOOKING HIM SQUARE IN THE FACE, REPLIES THAT HE IS, THEN, MIGHTY SUSCEPTIBLE TO TEMPTATION. IN THE BACKGROUND, THROUGH A PARTLY OPEN DOOR, IS SEEN LAURENT, THE VALET.

PARIS

CHEZ BARRIE FRERES, EDITEURS

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PHILADELPHIA: GEORGE BARRIE & SON

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BY

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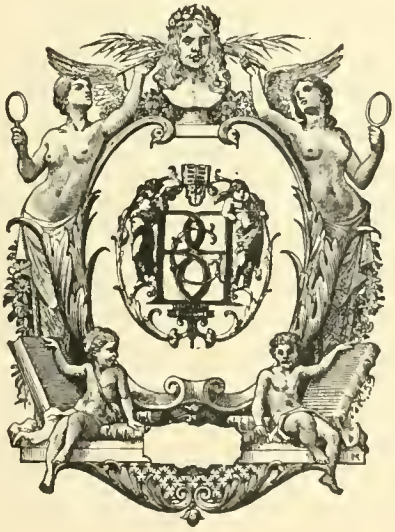
EDMOND HEDOUIN



PARIS

CHEZ BARRIE FRERES, ÉDITEURS

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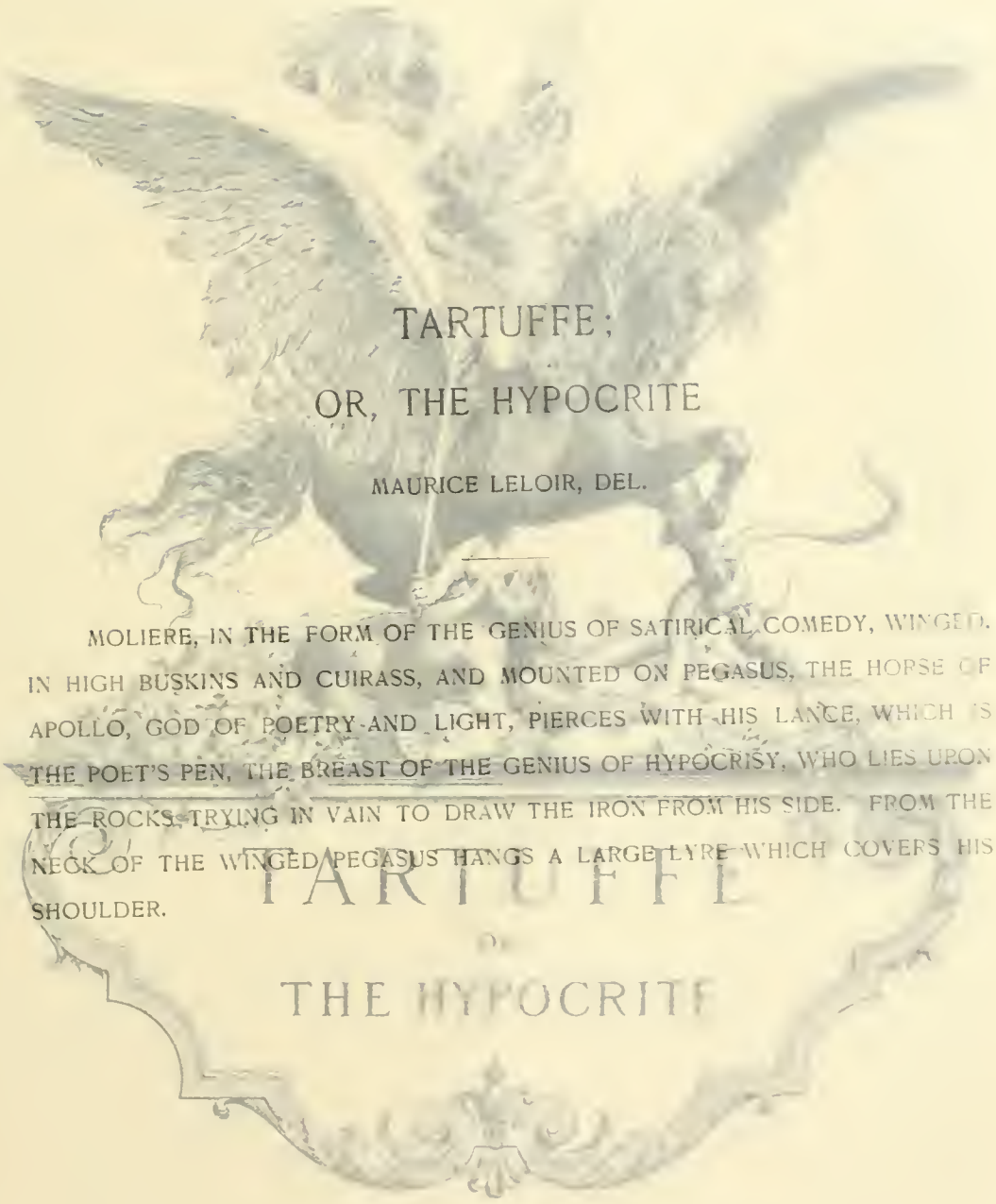
TARTUFFE;
OR, THE HYPOCRITE
MAURICE LELOIR, DEL.
MOLIERE, IN THE FORM OF THE GENIUS OF SATIRICAL COMEDY, WINGED, IN HIGH BUSKINS AND CUIRASS, AND MOUNTED ON PEGASUS, THE HORSE OF APOLLO, GOD OF POETRY AND LIGHT, PIERCES WITH HIS LANCE, WHICH IS THE POET'S PEN, THE BREAST OF THE GENIUS OF HYPOCRISY, WHO LIES UPON THE ROCKS TRYING IN VAIN TO DRAW THE IRON FROM HIS SIDE. FROM THE NECK OF THE WINGED PEGASUS HANGS A LARGE LYRE WHICH COVERS HIS SHOULDER.
TARTUFFE
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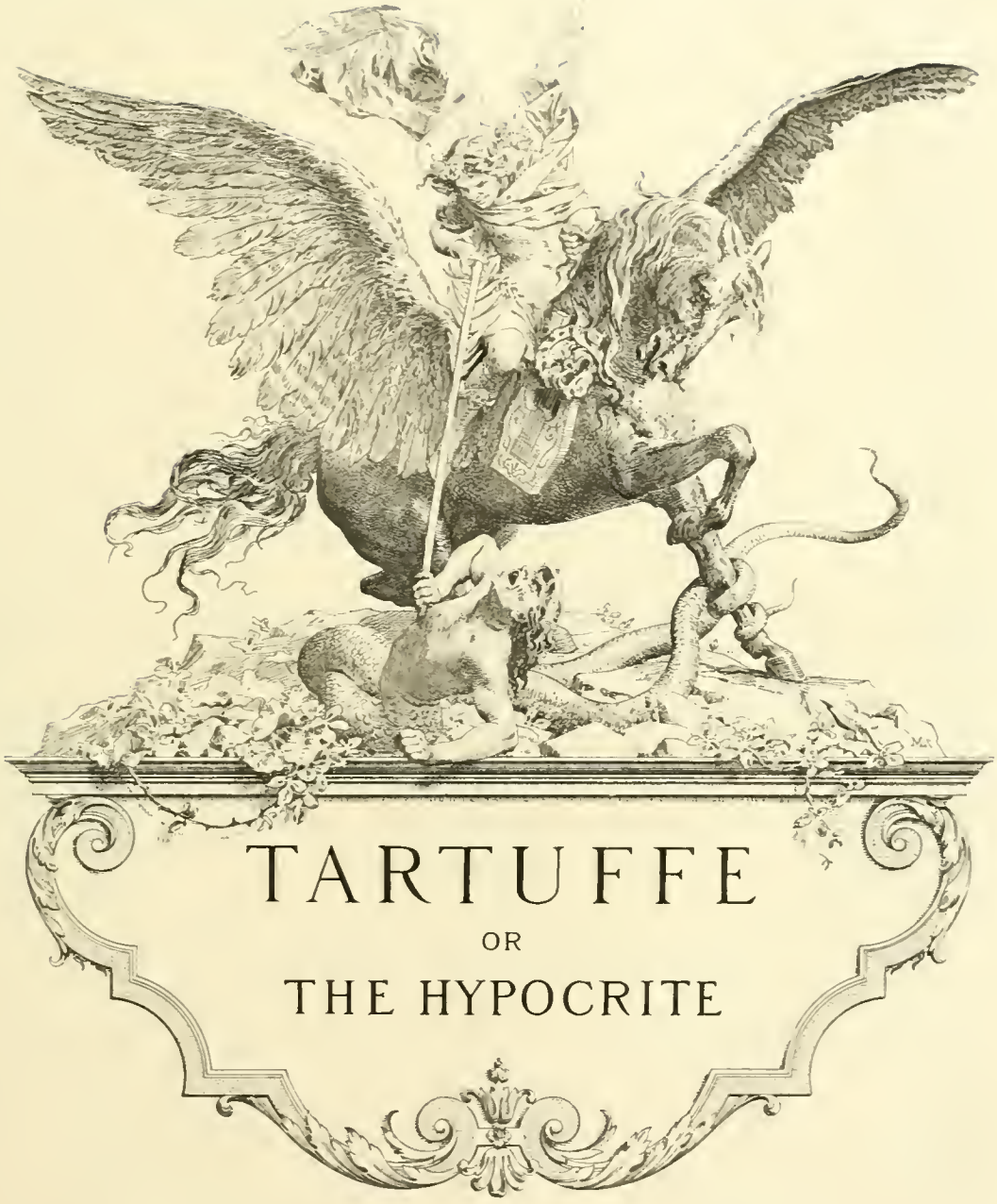
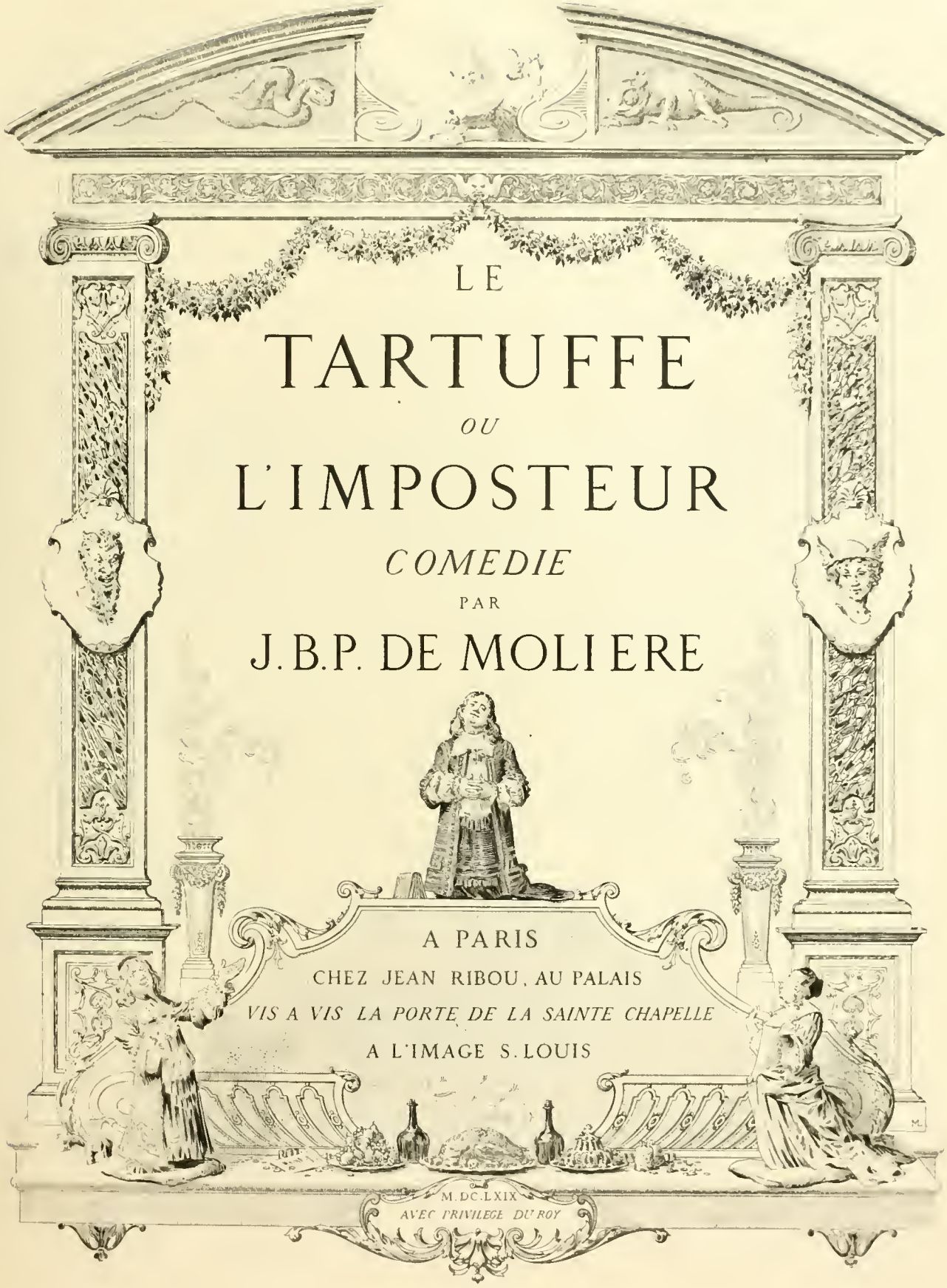


TARTUFFE

OR

THE HYPOCRITE

THE TITLE IS SURROUNDED BY A PORTICO, THE PILASTERS OF WHICH ARE FACED WITH PANELS OF COLORED MARBLE. AT THE BASE IS A SMOKING FOWL, BOTTLES, AND PLATES WITH A PATE AND WITH FRUIT, AND ON EACH SIDE ARE GOLD COINS OF A CHARITABLE DONATION. ABOVE, ON HIS KNEES, ON A SORT OF PEDESTAL, IS TARTUFFE, HIS HANDS CLASPED ON HIS BREAST, HIS HEAD THROWN BACK IN ORDER TO SEE NOTHING BUT HEAVEN. FROM PEDESTALS ON EACH SIDE OF THE HYPOCRITE RISE THE FUMES OF INCENSE. BELOW, ON THEIR KNEES ADMIRING TARTUFFE, ARE, ON THE LEFT, ORGON, AND ON THE RIGHT, ORGON'S MOTHER, MADAME PERNELLE, BOTH IN BEATIFIC ADMIRATION OF THE HOLY MAN. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PILASTERS ARE TWO ESCUTCHEONS; UPON ONE THE HEAD OF A SATYR, ON THE OTHER THE HEAD OF MERCURY, SYMBOLS OF WANTONNESS AND INTRIGUE. ABOVE IS DORINE, LEANING ON HER ELBOW, SMILING AT THE SCENE AND SHOWING THAT EVERYONE IS NOT DUPED BY THE MUMMERIES OF THE HYPOCRITE AND FALSE DEVOTEE. ON THE LEFT IS A SERPENT, AND, ON THE RIGHT, A CHAMELEON.


LE
TARTUFFE
OU
L'IMPOSTEUR
COMEDIE
PAR
J.B.P. DE MOLIERE
A PARIS
CHEZ JEAN RIBOU, AU PALAIS
VIS A VIS LA PORTE DE LA SAINTE CHAPELLE
A L'IMAGE S. LOUIS
M.DC.LXIX
AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY

Par Grâce et Privilège du Roy, donné à Paris le 15 jour de Mars 1669, signé: *Par le Roy en son Conseil* D'ALENCÉ, et scellé du grand Sceau de cire jaune, il est permis à J.-B. P. DE MOLIÈRE de faire imprimer, vendre et débiter, par tel Libraire ou Imprimeur qu'il voudra choisir, une Pièce de Théâtre de sa composition, intitulée L'IMPOSTEUR, pendant le temps et espace de dix années, à commencer du jour que ladite Pièce sera achevée d'imprimer pour la première fois, et Défenses sont faites à tous autres Libraires ou Imprimeurs de l'imprimer, faire imprimer, vendre et débiter, sans le consentement de l'Exposant, ou de ceux qui auront droict de luy; à peine aux contrevenans de six mille livres d'amende, confiscation des exemplaires contrefaits, et de tous despens, dommages et intérests, ainsi qu'il est porté plus au long par ledit Privilège.

Registré sur le Livre de la Communauté, suivant l'Arrest de la Cour du Parlement du 8 Avril 1653.

Signé : A. SOUBRON.

Achevé d'imprimer pour la première fois le 23 Mars 1669.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

Hypocrisy has at all times been a legitimate subject of satire in modern society. In classical literature, such a vice seems to have been unknown; for it can develop itself only in the midst of a society based, or pretending to be based, upon religion. Wherever indifference in matters of religion existed among the ancients, the hypocrite must have been rare; for his outward adornment of wise and moral saws could have been of no service to him. But as soon as religion became part and parcel of the state policy, men found it convenient and profitable to shelter their vices under a cloak of outward decorum, and tried to make the best of both worlds; but, above all, of this one. Literary men were not slow in describing this new character; and from the middle ages down to the present time, in all climes and in all countries, the hypocrite appears on the scene. He plays the principal part in the *Fabliaux;* and whether as an incontinent hermit, a lecherous chaplain, an intriguing monk, or a faithless confessor, he is always described in bold, but rather coarse. strokes, and gets generally punished and jeered at in the end. We find him in some of the early German satirical poems; and in the latter part of the epic, *Reynard, the Fox.* Rutebeuf, a *trouvère* of the thirteenth century, gives us, in the *Chanson des Ordres,* the portrait of a Pharisee, who seems an ancestor of Tartuffe and who goes about in a large, plain woolen gown, with a thin and pale face, austere mien and words, and who has the ambition of a lion, the claws of a leopard, and the malice of a scorpion.

In the continuation of *The Romaunt of the Rose,* by Jean de Meung, appears Faux Semblaunt, an ancestor of Tartuffe, whom Chaucer, in his translation, makes speak as follows:

> "Now am I knight, now chastelaine,
> Now prelate, and now chaplaine,
> Now priest, now clerke, now fostere,
> Now am I master, now schollere.
> Now monke, now chanon, now baily,
> What ever mister man am I . . .
> Well can I beare me under wede,
> Unlike is my word to my dede."

The conversation between Love and Faux Semblaunt is also from the same *Romaunt*, and shows the perfect hypocrite:

"Tell forth, and shame thee never adele,
For as thine habit sheweth wele,
Thou servest an holy hermite."
"Sooth is, but I am but an hypocrite,
Thou goest and preachest poverte?"
"Yea, sir, but Richesse hath poste,
Thou preachest abstinence also?"
"Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche of good meat and wine
As should a maister of divine,
For how that I me poore fame,
Yet all poore folke I disdaine."

Boccaccio, in his *Decameron*, describes several times the hypocrite, and Machiavelli, in his play, the *Mandragore*, acted in 1515 before the pope and his court, sketches a monkish pander, who lays down, in rather broad language, the maxim that the intentions of a man are everything, and that his actions are nothing.

About the same time there was played in France *la Farce des Brus*, in which Friar Ancelot and Friar Anselme are still more cynical than their prototype, Friar Timoteo . . . In the *Satyre Ménippée*, the hypocrite also appears, but full of sedition, and warlike. Maturin Regnier describes, in the eighteenth of his *Satires*, Macette, a hypocritical lady, in the following words: "Night and day she goes from convent to convent, visits the holy places, confesses herself often . . . She dwells and lives apart from the world; her penitent eyes weep only holy water." Such is her portrait; but this is what she herself says: "That is why I disguise the up-wellings of my heart, envelop my ardor in sackcloth and ashes, and hide my purpose, which is to abandon myself to pleasures. A concealed sin is half forgiven; the fault does not lie only in its being forbidden, but scandal and disgrace are the causes of the offense. Provided it be not known, no matter how, as long as we can deny it, we sin not at all. Moreover, the goodness of Heaven is greater than our offenses, and provided we confess, we are always pardoned." The portrait is more odious, but is not very unlike *Tartuffe*.

In Pascal's *Provinciales*, the Jesuitical hypocrite is also well described. All this tends to prove that of *Tartuffe* can be said what may be stated of all masterpieces of the human intellect,—that it is the most finished and best expressed result of a series of more or less complete ideas, which, for ages, men have attempted to shape into a certain form.

Molière evidently owes something to a tragi-comic tale of Scarron, called *The Hypocrites*. In this tale, the author relates how a certain adventurer, called Montufar, and two queans, the younger of whom was named Helen, and the older Mendez, resolved to take advantage of the credulity of the inhabitants of Seville, by pretending to be devout:

"They alighted within a league of the city, and having satisfied the muleteer, got thither about the dusk of the evening, and took up their lodgings at the first inn they found. Montufar hired a house, furnished it with very

ordinary furniture, and dressed himself all in black, with a cassock and cloak of the same color. Helen assumed the habit of a religious sister, that had devoted herself to pious works, and Mendez went dressed like a saint, valuing herself upon her hoary locks, and a huge monstrous chaplet, each bead of which was big enough to load a demi-culverin. The very next day after their arrival Montufar showed himself in the street, apparelled as I have already described him, marching with his arms across, and looking on the ground whenever he met any woman. He cried out with a voice shrill enough to have rent a rock, 'Blessed be the holy sacrament of the altar, and the thrice happy conception of the immaculate virgin!' and uttered many more devout exclamations with the same everlasting lungs of leather. He made the children whom he met in the streets repeat the same words after him; and moreover, assembled them sometimes together, to teach them to sing hymns and songs of devotion, and to instruct them in their Catechism. He repaired to the gaols and preached to the prisoners, comforting some and relieving others, begging victuals and other provisions for them, and frequently walking with a heavy basket upon his back. O detestable villain! thou wantedst nothing but to set up for a hypocrite, to be the most profligate accomplish'd rascal in the universe. These actions of virtue, in a fellow that was the least virtuous of mankind, procur'd him in a little time the reputation of a saint. Helen and Mendez likewise did all that in them lay to deserve canonization. The one called herself the mother, the other the sister of the thrice blessed Friar Martin. They went every day to the hospitals, where they assisted the sick, made their beds, washed their linen, and did all this at their own expense. By these means the most vicious people in Spain obtained the universal admiration of all Seville. About this time, a gentleman of Madrid happened to come thither about some private affairs; he had formerly been one of Helen's lovers, for women of this character have commonly more than one string to their bow. He knew Mendez to be a notorious cheat, and Montufar to be no better. One day as they came out of church, encompassed by a great number of persons, who kissed their very garments, and conjur'd them to remember them in their prayers, they were known by the aforesaid gentleman; who, burning with a Christian zeal, and not able to suffer three such notorious impostors to abuse the credulity of the whole city, broke through the crowd, and giving a hearty box on the ear to Montufar, 'You wicked cheat,' cried he, 'do you neither fear God nor man?' He would have said more, but his good intention, which in truth was somewhat of the rashest, had not the success it deserved; all the people fell on him whom they believed to have committed sacrilege, in offering this violence to their saint. He was beaten to the ground, and had certainly been torn to pieces by the mob, had not Montufar, by a wonderful presence of mind, undertaken his protection by covering him with his body, keeping off those that were most enraged with him, and exposing himself to their blows. 'My brethren,' cried he to them as loud as he could bawl, 'let the poor wretch alone, for the love of God: be quiet, for the love of the blessed Virgin.' These few words having appeased this horrible tempest, the people made room for brother Martin to pass, who went up to the unfortunate gentleman, well pleased in his heart to see him so used, though showing outwardly a mighty concern for him. He raised him up from the ground, embraced and kissed him, all covered as he was with blood and dirt, and reprimanded the people for their rude behavior. 'I am a wicked man,' said he to the standers-by. 'I am a sinner; I am one that never did anything pleasing in the eyes of God. Do you believe,' continued he, 'because you see me dressed in this religious garb, that I have not been a robber all my lifetime, the scandal of others and the destruction of myself? Alas! you are mistaken, my brethren, make me the mark of your contumelies, pelt me with stones, nay, draw your swords upon me.' Having spoken these words with a counterfeit sorrow, he threw himself, with a zeal yet more counterfeit, at the feet of his enemy, and kissed them, not only begged his pardon, but likewise gathered up his sword, cloak, and hat, which he had lost in the scuffle. He helped him on with them again, and leading him by the hand to the end of the street, took his leave of him, after he had bestowed abundance of embraces and as many benedictions on him. The poor man was, as it were, out of his wits at what he had seen, and with what had been done to him, and was so full of confusion that he durst hardly show his head all the while his affairs detained him at Seville. Montufar had won the hearts of all the city by his pretended act of devotion; the people gaz'd at him with admiration, and the children cried after him, 'a Saint, a Saint,' as they cried out 'a Fox, a Fox,' when they saw his enemy in the street. From this moment he lived

the happiest life in the world. Some nobleman, cavalier, magistrate, or prelate, perpetually invited him to dinner, and strove who should have the most of his company. If he were asked his name, he would answer, 'He was a beast of burthen, a sink of filth, vessel of iniquity,' and such like noble attributes which his counterfeit devotion dictated to him. When he visited any of the ladies, he complained to them incessantly of the nothingness of his dispensation, and the deadness of the inward man, adding, he wanted concentration of heart and recollection of spirit. In short, he always talked to them in this magnificent cant and holy gibberish. No alms were giveu in Seville but what passed through his hands, or those of Helen and Mendez, who were not wanting likewise to act their parts to admiration, and stood as fair for a red-letter preferment in the almanack (I mean to be sainted) as Montufar himself. A lady of quality, who was a widow and devout even to superstition, sent them every day two dishes of meat for dinner, and as many for supper; and you must know, these dishes were dressed by the very best cooks in Seville. Their house was too little to receive the numerous presents which were daily sent to them. A woman that had a mind to be with child put her petition into their hands, to the end, by their mediation, it might be presented to the tribunal of heaven. Another that had a son in the Indies did the same; as likewise a third that had a brother, prisoner in Algiers. Nay, the poor widow who had to contest with a powerful adversary before an ignorant or covetous judge, did not doubt the success of her cause, when she had once made a present to them according to her ability. Some gave them sweetmeats and conserves, others pictures and ornaments for their closets. Several charitable persons trusted them with great quantities of linen and woolen cloth to dispose among the needy that were ashamed to beg, and with considerable sums of money to distribute as they saw convenient. No one came to visit them empty-handed, and their future canonization was as firmly believed as an article of faith. At last the credulity of the people ran so high that they came to consult them about their doubtful affairs and things to come. Helen, who was as subtle as a devil, managed all the answers, delivering her oracles in few words, and those capable of receiving different interpretations. Their beds were mean and homely; but at night, with all the fine furniture a man could desire, that loves to sleep deliciously, their house being plentifully furnished with good feather beds, fine coverlids, and, in short, with all sorts of movables that contribute to the convenience and pleasure of life; and all this they pretended was to be given to some poor widow, whose goods had been seized in execution, or to furnish some young woman's house who had married without any fortune. Their doors were shut up in winter at five, and in summer at seven o'clock, as punctually as in a well-regulated convent; and then Jack was wound up, the spits turned merrily round, the capons put down to the fire, the table handsomely spread, when our hypocritical triumvirate ate heartily, and drank plentifully to their own and the healths of those people they had cheated. Montufar and Helen lay together for fear of spirits, and their footman and maid that were of the same complexion, copied so pious an example. As for the good Mendez, she always lay alone, being more taken up with contemplation than with action ever since she had addicted herself to the black art. This was their constant practice, instead of employing their time in mental prayer or in doing penance. 'Tis no wonder if, living so jolly a life, they looked plump and fat; all the city blessed Heaven for it, and were mightily surprised that persons of so much austerity and self-denial should look better than those that lived in luxury and ease. For the space of three years they deceived the eyes of all the inhabitants of Seville, and by receiving presents from everyone, and appropriating to their own use the alms that passed through their hands, they heaped together an incredible number of pistoles. All good success was ascribed to the efficacy of their prayers; they stood godfathers to all children, made matches for all the city, and were the common arbitrators of differences. At last, Heaven was weary of conniving any longer at their impious lives. Montufar, who was cholerick in his temper, used frequently to beat his valet, who could not bear it, and had quitted his service a hundred times, if Helen, who was more discreet than her gallant, had not prevented it by appeasing him with fair words and presents. One day, having drubbed him immoderately, for little or no reason, the boy got to the door, and blinded by his passion, ran directly to the magistrates to inform against these three hypocrites, whom the world took for saints. Helen's diabolical spirit foretold what would happen, therefore advised Montufar to run off with all the gold they had in the house and retire to some place of security till this tempest, which threatened them, had spent itself.

It was no sooner said than put into execution; they carried off the most valuable things, and walking down the street as unconcerned as if they had dreaded nothing, went out at one gate."[1]

Twenty years after *Tartuffe* had been played, La Bruyère added, in the sixth edition of the *Caractères*, the portrait of Onuphre, the Hypocrite. We give it here below:

"Onuphre has no other bed but a cover of grey serge, but he sleeps upon cotton and down; he is also dressed simply but comfortably. I mean that he wears some very light clothing in summer, and some very soft and woolly in winter; he wears very fine shirts, which he takes very good care to hide. He does not say my hairshirt and my scourge; on the contrary, he would pass then for what he is, a hypocrite, and he wishes to pass for what he is not, for a devout man. It is true that he acts in such a manner that people believe, without his saying so, that he wears a hairshirt, and that he flagellates himself. There are some books lying, all over his room, accidentally. Open them, they are *The Spiritual Combat, The Inward Christian, The Holy Year;* other books are under lock and key. If he walks through the town, and if he sees from afar a man before whom it is necessary that he should pretend to be religious, downcast eyes, a slow and modest gait, a collected air, are familiar to him; he plays his part. If he enters a church, he observes, to begin with, by whom he can be seen, and, according to what he has discovered, he kneels down and prays, or he neither thinks of kneeling down or of praying. If a good man, and one in authority, draws near to him, who can see and hear him, he not only prays but is lost in meditation; he has upheavings of the spirit, he sighs aloud; but if the good man goes away, the latter, who sees him depart, gets calmed down, and no longer utters a sound. Another time he enters a church, makes his way through the crowd, chooses a place where he can collect his thoughts, where every one can see how he humbles himself. If he hears courtiers talking or laughing, or who are less silent in church than in an ante-chamber, he makes more noise than they to get them to be silent; he begins again his meditation, which is always a comparison between those persons and himself, and by which he does not lose. He avoids an empty and solitary church, where he might hear two masses, one after another, and a sermon, attend vespers and compline,—all this between God and himself, and without anybody thanking him for it. He loves the parish church; he frequents churches where there are a great many people; people are sure not to come there for nothing: people are seen there. He chooses two or three days in the year, when, without any necessity whatever, he fasts or mortifies himself; but at the end of the winter, he coughs; there is something wrong in the chest; he is bilious; he has an attack of ague, people entreat, urge him, and even quarrel with him, so that he should not keep his fasts, when he has begun them, and he gives way out of complaisance. If Onuphre is named an umpire in a quarrel between relatives, or in a lawsuit amongst a family, he is on the side of the strongest, I mean the richest; and he cannot persuade himself that a man who has much wealth can be in the wrong. If he is on a good footing with a rich man, who is ignorant of his real character, whose parasite he is, and who may assist him very much, he does not cajole that rich man's wife; he makes her no advances, nor a declaration of his love; he will run away, he will leave his cloak behind him, if he is not as sure of her as he is of himself: he

has not the least idea of employing devotional phrases to seduce her; he does not employ them usually; but on set purpose, and when they can be useful to him, and never when they would only serve to make him very ridiculous. He knows where to find more sociable and more docile females than the wife of his friend; he does not abandon them for long, even if it should only be to have it said that he has withdrawn from the world for some time. And who could have any doubts about it, when they see him make again his appearance with an emaciated countenance, and like a man who has mortified himself. Moreover, the women who flourish and prosper as devotees suit him, only with this small difference, that he neglects those who have grown old, and that he looks after the young ones, and amongst those the most beautiful and the best shaped; that is his attraction; they go away and he goes away; they return and he returns; they remain and he remains; he has the consolation of seeing them in every place and at every hour. Who would not be edified by that? They are pious and he is pious. He does not forget to take advantage of the blindness of his friend, and of the way he is prepossessed in his favor; now he borrows money from him; again he acts in such a manner that his friend offers it to him; his friends fall foul of him because he has no recourse to them when he is in want. Sometimes he will not receive a farthing without giving his note of hand for it which he is quite sure never to take up. Another time he states, and with a certain intonation, that he wants nothing, and that he does when he only wants a small sum; at some other time he praises publicly the generosity of a certain man, in order to work upon his friend's honor, and to induce him to put down a very large sum; he does not think of accaparating the whole of his succession, nor of obtaining a general donation of all his property, above all if the question is to take them away from a son, the lawful heir. A devout man is neither a miser, nor violent, nor unjust, nor even interested. Onuphre is not devout, but he wishes to be thought so, and through a perfect, though false imitation of piety, advances his interests in an underhand manner. He therefore does not come into collision with direct heirs; he never insinuates himself in a family where there is a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established; their rights are too powerful and too inviolable; they cannot be infringed without public scandal, and that he fears; without such an undertaking coming to the ears of the prince, from whom he hides all his dealings, for fear of being discovered, and of appearing in his true character. He plots against collateral heirs, who can be attacked with more impunity; he is the terror of male and female cousins, of the nephew and the niece; the flatterer and the firm friend of every uncle who has made a fortune. He pretends to be the legitimate heir of every old man who dies rich and without children; and the latter must disinherit him if he wishes his relatives to receive what he leaves behind. If Onuphre does not find an opportunity to deprive them wholly of it, he takes at least a good part of it: a little slander, less than that, a trifling, slighting remark, suffices for that pious design, and such a talent he possesses in the highest degree of perfection; he often considers it his obligation not to let it lie by uselessly; according to him it is our duty to attack certain people; and these are the people whom he does not like, whom he wishes to harm, and whose spoils he longs for. He obtains what he wishes without even taking the trouble of opening his mouth; they speak to him of Eudoxe,

he smiles or sighs; they ask some more questions, they insist that he should answer, he replies nothing; and he is right, he has said enough."

We can now compare La Bruyère's careful delineation of the hypocrite with Molière's masterly, life-like creation of him. There is no doubt in my mind that La Bruyere wished to correct his master; the mention he makes of "a hairshirt and a scourge, of a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established," sufficiently prove this. But I do not think he has succeeded. La Bruyère has given an almost photographic sketch of the canting hypocrite such as he appeared in 1690; he has described to us his dress, his manners, his slang, and even the religious books then in vogue; but we feel all the time that Onuphre only pretends to be religious, because it was then the fashion to be so, because the king gave the tone to the courtiers to be pious. In the following reign, Onuphre would have been most probably a *roué*, and exchanged his cloak of hypocrisy for a velvet jacket, adorned with gold lace; he would have forsaken the handsome pious young devotees to go and make his appearance at the suppers of the Regent. Onuphre is not a man; he is only an automaton, set in motion by every blast of court favor or disfavor; he is a model of a time-serving courtier. That La Bruyère may have thought so himself is not impossible, for Onuphre's portrait is to be found in the chapter on "Fashion" amongst the delineations of the amateur of dowers, the collector of engravings, the lover of birds; and immediately preceding it is a sketch of a courtier. If the real hypocrite had been limned, his portrait would have found a place in the chapter on "Man," or in that on "Judgments."

But Molière gives us the hypocrite by nature, the man who would be a canting scoundrel, even if it did not pay; who cannot help being so; who is a human being, and therefore not perfect; who is a man, and thus sensually inclined; who employs certain means to subdue his passions, and to become a "whited sepulchre," but who gives all the more way to them when he imagines that he can do so with impunity. Even from a dramatic point of view, La Bruyère's portrait of a man whom nothing can move, who is always prudent and circumspect, is only possessed by one idea, has but a single object which he pursues, and who covers his vices with such an impenetrable veil, and is forever so much on his guard that he can never be caught in a snare; would not make a character fit for the stage, and would disgust an audience. Besides, how could the arrant hypocrite be punished unless he fell in love, and that with the wife of his benefactor, for otherwise Orgon might perhaps have pitied him still and exclaimed, "the poor man!"

Molière's Tartuffe is the hypocrite of all ages and for all times, who does not depend on the meretricious allurements of the court to become one, but who would be one, I am afraid, even in England, and at the present day. Pecksniff seems to me to be a relative of Tartuffe, although his cant is more about humanity and less about religion. But I imagine Tartuffe to have been a man of a rather florid complexion, with "red ears and ruddy lips," inclined to be stout, with expressive eyes and very beautiful white, plump hands, of which he takes great care and which he is very fond of showing. He is always well dressed in clothes of sombre hue; his linen is scrupulously white; his manners are gentlemanlike and insinuating; he is ever polite, but can be firm, and shows sometimes that he can be so; he

is slow and impressive of speech, with an unctuous or rather oily flavor; he persuades now and then some hysterical females of defective education, but oftener terrifies the old and feeble-minded; he is a middle-aged man, of rather goodly shape, and capable of inspiring one of those semi-mystic, semi-sensual passions, of whose baneful existence evidence crops up at certain periods amongst so-called civilized nations. He certainly never can have been the low-bred, sniffling, caddish-looking, soddened, pasty-faced beadle which is generally represented as his prototype on the stage. If Tartuffe had been such a man, he would not have obtained a footing at Orgon's house, and might have entertained the idea of courting a kitchen-wench or a scullery-maid, but would never have dared to attempt to seduce the virtuous and lady-like Elmire.

It has been stated that Molière, in delineating Tartuffe, intended to depict the Abbé de Roquette, who afterward became Bishop of Autun. This town appears to have been unfortunate in its episcopal guides, for Talleyrand was also for some time bishop of that place. But the identity of the Abbé de Roquette with Tartuffe is more than doubtful, and rests on a tradition that M. de Guilleragues, who lived in the hotel of the Prince de Conti with the abbé, must have communicated to Molière some of the latter's hypocritical tricks. According to others, Tartuffe's adventure with Elmire happened to the abbé at the Duchess de Longueville's house. The Duchess de Longueville, a sister of the great Condé, had, at the time *Tartuffe* was first represented, only just become a widow, and was already forty-five years old, whilst the abbé was four years younger. Although, therefore, it may have happened at the duchess's house, it is very unlikely to have occurred with that lady herself. The whole story appears doubtful; for at the death of the duchess her relatives chose De Roquette, who in the meantime had become Bishop of Autun, to preach her funeral sermon. This choice would not have been made if he had disgraced himself in any way at the noble lady's house. The abbé preached so well that Madam de Sévigné, who was present, wrote to her daughter: "He was not Tartuffe, he was not a pantaloon, but an eminent prelate." At another time she wrote to the same: "We were obliged to go and dine with M. d'Autun. The poor man!" This only proves to my mind that Madam de Sévigné thought that the abbé was like Tartuffe, but is no proof that Molière, in writing this comedy, intended to hit the rather worldly-minded abbé, who is said to have been a great intriguant, and to have preached sermons which he did not write, if we may believe the following epigram, which circulated at that time:

> Sermons penned by other men,
> Roquette preaches, people state;
> I, who know where they are bought,
> Say they are his, at any rate.

Another tradition, which rests upon even fewer grounds, mentions that Louis XIV., one evening during the campaign of 1662, just at the point of going to dine, advised Péréfixe, Bishop of Rhodez, who had been the king's teacher, to do likewise. As it was a fast-day the bishop said he was only going to take a slight meal. When he had retired the king saw one of the by-standers smiling, and upon his asking him the reason of this the

latter replied that his Majesty need not be uneasy about M. de Rhodez, and then told what he had seen the bishop eat for his dinner. At the mention of each dish, it is said that the king exclaimed each time, "The poor man!" and that Molière was present at this scene, and afterward reminded Louis XIV. of it.

I can only say that all these traditions seem to me very unlikely. One thing is certain, that the noun Tartuffe is connected with the old French *truffe*, *truffle*, a truffle, and also a jest, a fib. In cognate languages, in the Italian *comedia dell' arte*, we find *Truffa* and *Truffaldino*, as rascally servants; in the Venetian, *Tofolo* and *Tirtofolo*, a stout but small knavish servant; in the Milanese dialect we have *Tartuffol*, a dotard as well as a truffle; and in the Neapolitan tongue, *Taratufolo*, a simpleton.[2] All these seem to be connected with the low Latin word *truffactor*, deceiver, with the augmentative *tra*; hence *tratuffar*, euphonically *tratuffar*. Perhaps Molière may have thought of some imaginary connection between the supposed erotic powers of the truffle and the amativeness of the hypocritical title-role of his play; but, in any case, he could have found the name *tartuffo* in *Il Malmantile racquistato*, a facetious Italian poem by Lorenzo Lippi, which circulated in manuscript in France long before *Tartuffe* was performed. The author of the *Observations sur une comédie de Molière* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*), which appeared after *Tartuffe's* first three acts had been represented on the sixth day of the *Pleasure of the Enchanted Island*, always calls the hero of the piece Tartouffle. Montufar, the chief character in Scarron's tale, *The Hypocrites*, probably from the Spanish *tufo*, vapor, may also have partly led Molière to use the name of his hero. In an old French translation of Platina's *De Honesta Voluptate*, published in 1505, *truffe* and *tartuffe* are used as synonymous words for hypocrites; and Molière, in his first petition to the king, speaks of the *tartuffes*, meaning the impostors,—not using the word as a personal, but as a generic name.

We have already said that the first three acts of *Tartuffe* were first performed at Versailles, on the 12th of May, 1664, and that the king forbade it to be given to the public; for, in the official *Gazette* of the 17th of the same month, we find: "This great monarch is careful to cut off all the seeds of division in the Church, and none of his predecessors bore ever more gloriously the title of its Eldest Son, which he keeps up by that delicacy which he shows for everything which regards it, as he has shown it lately by his prohibiting the performance of a comedy, called *The Hypocrite*, which his Majesty, piously enlightened in everything, judged absolutely injurious to religion, and capable of producing very dangerous effects."

The king was staying at Fontainebleau from the 16th of May until the 13th of August of the same year (1664), and it was during that time that the Vicar of St. Barthélemy, Pierre Roulès (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.), presented to the king his pamphlet: *Le Roi glorieux au monde, ou Louis XIV., le plus glorieux de tous les rois du monde.* In this pamphlet, which is full of flattery—I had nearly said idolatry—of Louis XIV., Molière is attacked. I shall give first, as a curiosity, a passage in which the king is sufficiently bespattered with praise: "There are certainly, on the whole earth we live on, sufficient kings, but few who are, and who can be qualified, and really be called glorious kings. But amongst all, and even if they

should be numberless. Louis XIV., who reigns in France, has the happiness and glory of belonging to them. And to know that he is in that position, and to be convinced of honoring him with respect in this supreme and royal quality and dignity, what else is necessary but to behold his grandeur and glory, the lustre and the brilliant splendor of his virtues, the lofty elevation of his power, and his very great merits, and the esteem in which they are held, or otherwise to measure him by his countenance; but I make a mistake, by the highest perfection amongst all the other kings of the whole world. I am not ignorant that comparisons are odious, that it is not a title to consideration, nor a very glorious advantage to be grand and eminent, only because others are disparaged and valued less highly. I desire, therefore, not to raise the lofty and eminent glory of Louis XIV., by despising and lowering every one, but by this characteristic that he has the honor of being the master and the sovereign of all things, which, without being idolaters, we worship and reverence publicly in his royal Majesty, because he is a terrestrial god and a divine man, without example and without equal, having nothing to struggle against or to dispute with except himself."

I think this laudation is sufficiently nauseous. Let us see now what this pious vicar has to say for Molière: "A man, or rather a demon incarnate and dressed like a man, the greatest unbeliever and free-thinker that ever existed even in past ages, possessed sufficient impiety and abomination to draw out of his diabolical mind a play quite ready to become public, in having it represented upon a stage, to make a mockery of the whole Church, to contemn the most sacred character and the most divine function and that which is most holy in the Church. . . . He deserved for this sacrilegious and impious attempt a final, exemplary and public punishment, and even the stake, a forerunner of the fires of hell, to expiate so heinous a crime of high-treason against Heaven, which aims at destroying the Catholic religion, in criticising and jeering at its most religious and holy practices. . . . But his Majesty, after having given him a severe reprimand, and animated by a just wrath, has, by a trait of his usual clemency, in which he imitates the essential gentleness of God, condescendingly forgiven him his insolence and his demoniacal boldness, in order to give him time to repent of it publicly and solemnly all his life. And to stop successfully the exposition and the sale of his impious and irreligious production, and of his licentious and free-thinking poetry, he has commanded him, under pain of death, to suppress and tear up, to hush up and burn all that was written of it."

Although this language was pretty strong, it did not prevent the troupe of Molière from being invited to come to Fontainebleau, to contribute to the amusements presented to Monsignor Chigi, the Pope's Nuncio. They remained there from the 21st of July to the 13th of August, and it appears that, during that time, Molière read to the Nuncio *Tartuffe*, and that the Nuncio did not disapprove of it. He then presented to Louis XIV. the following petition:

SIRE,[3]—The aim of comedy being to correct men by amusing them, I thought that in the situation which I occupy,[4] I could not do better than attack by pictures full of ridicule the vices of my age; and hypocrisy being no doubt not only one of the most usual among men, but also one of the most annoying as well as most dangerous, I had the idea, Sire, that I would be rendering not a small service to the honest people of your kingdom, if I

wrote a comedy that should decry the hypocrites, expose plainly the studied grimaces of those ultra-godly people, all the covert scoundrelism of these false coiners of devotion, who try to inveigle people with their counterfeit zeal, and their sophistic charity.

I have constructed this comedy, Sire, with all the care, and, as I believe, with all the circumspection demanded by the delicacy of the material; and the better to preserve the esteem and respect due to the truly pious, I have distinguished as much as I could the character which I had to sketch. I have left no room for equivocal interpretation, I have left out everything that could confound the good with the bad, and have employed in this picture only those express colors and essential traits which would serve to reveal, at the first glance, the veritable and downright hypocrite. Nevertheless, all my precautions have been useless. People have taken advantage, Sire, of the delicacy of your feelings on the subject of religion, and have succeeded in probing you in your only vulnerable spot, I mean your respect for sacred things. The Tartuffes on the sly, have been artful enough to find grace in your Majesty's sight; in short, the originals have caused the copy to be suppressed, no matter how innocent and startlingly like it may have been.

Great as was the blow caused by the suppression of this work, my misfortune has been mitigated by the manner in which your Majesty explained yourself on this subject;[5] and I have seen, Sire, that all cause of complaint was taken away from me, when you declared kindly that you found nothing objectionable in this comedy, which you nevertheless forbade me to produce in public.

But notwithstanding this glorious declaration of the greatest and most enlightened monarch in the universe, even notwithstanding the approbation of Monsignor the Nuncio, and the majority of our prelates, who, when I privately read my work to them, have all fully concurred in the sentiments of your Majesty,—notwithstanding all this, I say, a book has been published which openly contradicts all those august testimonies.[6] Your Majesty may say what he pleases, the Nuncio and the prelates may proclaim their judgment as much as they like, my comedy, without having even been seen, is diabolical, and as diabolical is my brain; I am a demon incarnate, and dressed like a man, an unbeliever, an impious wretch, deserving of exemplary punishment. It is not enough that the flames expiate my offense in public, I should be quit of it at too cheap a rate; the charitable zeal of this gallant and good man hardly cares to stop there: he requires that I shall find no mercy at the hands of God, he insists absolutely that I must be damned; that is a settled affair.

This book, Sire, has been presented to your Majesty, and you can yourself doubtless judge how annoying it is to me to see myself daily exposed to the insults of these gentlemen; the harm these slanders do me in the eyes of the world, whether they are to be meekly borne, and the interest I have to rid myself of its imposture, and to show the public that my comedy is nothing less than what it is said to be. I shall not say anything, Sire, about the claims due to my reputation, or to the justification of the innocence of my work in the eyes of the world; enlightened kings, like you, have no need to have people's wishes pointed out to them: they perceive, like God, our wants, and know better than we do, what they ought to grant us.[7] It is sufficient for me to place my interests in your Majesty's hands, and to await respectfully from him whatever he may be pleased to ordain on the subject.

Although the king did not yet allow *Tartuffe* to be performed in public, the first three acts were played, by order of Monsieur, the only brother of the king, on 25th of September, 1664, at Villers-Cotterets, before the king and the whole court; and the complete comedy, in five acts, was played at Raincy, the seat of the Princess Palatine, and by order of the Prince de Condé, on the 29th of November, 1664, and on the 8th of November of the following year. During all this time Molière's influence at court had been strengthened; *The Misanthrope* had been successfully played; he had contributed during the winter, 1666–1667, several comedies to the *Ballet des Muses*, and when, in the summer of the latter year, the king set out for his campaign in Flanders, Molière, reckoning upon a verbal authorization

of Louis, brought out *Tartuffe* at the Palais-Royal, on the 5th of August, 1667, under the name of *The Impostor*. Tartuffe became a layman, and was called Panulphe; he wore a little hat, long hair, a large collar, a sword, and lace all over his coat; whilst some passages were altogether suppressed or toned down. But the next day the play was forbidden by order of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon. On the 8th of the same month, two actors of Moliere's troupe, La Grange and La Thorillière, started off in a post-chaise, in order to go and present to the king, who was at that time before Lille, the following petition:

SIRE,—It is a very bold step on my part to come and trouble a great monarch in the midst of his glorious conquests; but in the position in which I am, Sire, where am I to find protection except in the place where I have come to seek for it? And what am I to invoke against the authority of the power that overwhelms me, unless it be the source of that power and authority, the just dispenser of the absolute commands, the sovereign judge, and the master of all things.

Until now, Sire, my comedy has not met with your Majesty's favor. In vain have I produced it under the title of *The Impostor*, and disguised the personage beneath the garb of a man of the world; vainly have I given him a small hat, long hair, a great collar, a sword, and lace over the whole of his dress; in vain have I modified it in several places, and carefully cut out everything that I deemed could furnish the shadow of a pretext to the celebrated originals of the portrait I wanted to paint; all has been of no use. The cabal has re-awoke at the simple conjectures which they may have had about the matter. They have found means to surprise minds, who, on any other subject, profess never to allow themselves to be surprised.[9] No sooner did my comedy appear than it has found itself struck down by the blow of a power which is entitled to respect; and all I have been able to do in this struggle, in order to save myself from the burst of this tempest, was to say that your Majesty had had the kindness to allow me the representation, and that I did not think there was any need to ask this permission from others, seeing that it was your decree only which had prohibited it.

I doubt not, Sire, that the people whom I depict in my comedy will employ many artifices with your Majesty, and will try to enlist among their party many truly pious, who are the more susceptible of being deceived, because they judge others by themselves. They have the knack of investing their intentions with most beautiful colors. Whatever face they may put upon them, it is not really God's interest that causes them to move in this; they have shown this sufficiently well in the comedies which they have allowed so often to be played in public without saying a word about them. Those only attacked piety and religion, for which they care very little; but this one attacks and shows them up personally, and that is what they cannot tolerate.[10] They cannot forgive me for having unmasked their impostures to the eyes of the whole world; and, doubtlessly, they will not fail to tell your Majesty that everybody has been scandalized at my comedy. But the real truth, sire, is that all Paris has only been scandalized at the prohibition of it; that the most scrupulous have found the representation of it most salutary; and that people have been astonished that persons of such well-known probity should show such great deference for those whom the whole world ought to hold in horror, and should be so opposed to that true piety which they profess.

I await respectfully the verdict which your Majesty will deign to pronounce upon this subject; but certain is it, Sire, that I must no longer think of writing comedies, if the Tartuffes should gain the day, because they will, through this, assume the right to prosecute me more than ever, and find something to cavil at in the most innocent things that will fall from my pen.

May your kindness, Sire, vouchsafe to protect me against their venomous hatred! and permit me to hope that at your return from so glorious a campaign, I may be able to divert your Majesty after the fatigues of your conquests, to provide you with some innocent pleasures after such noble works, and to make the monarch smile who caused all Europe to tremble.[11]

On the 11th of August of the same year (1667) there appeared an order of Hardouin, Archbishop of Paris, addressed to all the vicars and curates of Paris and the suburbs, "forbidding all persons of our diocese to represent, read, or hear read the above-mentioned comedy (*Tartuffe*), either publicly or privately, under any name or pretext whatever, and that under pain of excommunication." On the 20th of the same month, there was published a *Lettre sur la comédie de l'Imposteur*, which has sometimes been attributed to Molière himself, but which bears no marks of his style or of his clearness of expression. It is possible, however, that one of his friends may have written it, and brought forward some of the author's arguments, but not in Molière's words. This letter, which is rather prolix, begins with a careful and interesting analysis of the play, well worth reading, even at the present time, and which shows the alterations which it underwent since its first representation, and ends with two reflections—the first, that some people think that the religious subjects should never be mentioned on the stage. The author combats this opinion by stating that "religion is only the perfection of reason, at least as regards morality; that it purifies and elevates it, that it dispels only the darkness which sin has spread in the place where it dwells; in short, that religion is only a more perfect reason." He further argues that though "religion has its places and times fixed for its sacrifices, its ceremonies, and its other mysteries, . . . its truths, expressed in words, belong to all times and all places;" that the ancients never scrupled to produce their gods upon the stage, and that in early times Passion-plays were represented. His second reflection is that this comedy has given a fatal blow to what is called "solid gallantry," and that "though preachers thunder against it, confessors reprove it, pastors threaten, well-constituted minds lament it, parents, husbands and masters incessantly watch over it, and labor continually and strenuously in vain to check the impetuous torrent of impurity which desolates France; it is, however, considered ridiculous amongst fashionable people not to be carried away by it; and that some glory not more in loving incontinency than others in reproving it."

Lille surrendered on the 27th of August. Louis XIV. returned to Saint Germain on the 7th of September; but no permission was given to play *Tartuffe*, and on the 25th of September, 1667, the theatre of the Palais-Royal opened with *The Misanthrope*. But during the last months of the year, Molière did not play. I suppose he exemplified the truth of the saying, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." He played again, however, in the beginning of the year 1668, had *Amphitryon* performed on the 13th of January, *George Dandin* and *The Miser* in the same year. At last, after two years' waiting, and after *Tartuffe* had been read repeatedly at the houses of the principal nobility and gentry, and been played anew, on the 20th of September, 1668, at Chantilly, the seat of the Prince de Condé, in the presence of Monsieur and his wife, permission was granted to play it; and on the 5th of February, 1669, it appeared for the first time before the public. That very day, Molière sent to the king the following petition:

SIRE,—A most respectable physician,[12] whose patient I have the honor to be, promises me, and will bind himself by a legal act, executed before a notary, to make me live thirty years longer if I can procure him a favor of your Majesty. In answer to his promise, I have told him that I do not want as much, and that I would be

satisfied if he would only promise me not to kill me. This favor, Sire, is a canonry in your royal palace of Vincennes, vacant through the death of . . .

May I still venture to ask this favor of your Majesty, the very day of the great resurrection of Tartuffe, resuscitated by your kindness? I am, through this first favor, reconciled with the devotees: and through the second, I shall be reconciled with the doctors. For me it is, no doubt, too many favors at one time, but perhaps it is not too many for your Majesty; and I await, with a little respectful expectation, the answer to my petition.

The *Tartuffe* was a great success, and was played nearly forty-four consecutive times at the Palais-Royal, before crowded houses, besides five times at noblemen's seats.

At the end of the year 1669, appeared a little piece, in one act, and in verse, called *La Critique du Tartuffe*, which seems never to have been played, and preceded by a satire, also in verse, in which Pradon, the great enemy of Boileau, appears to have had a hand. In it is stated that the great success of Molière's play was owing to its having been forbidden so long. In the *Critique* itself, it is said that "he steals from a thousand authors, Spanish nonsense, but the age allows it, and in spite of all my sense; the poor man! . . . I pardon him."

The storms that were now raised against *Tartuffe* originated chiefly with the clergy. Bourdaloue, in his sermon for the seventh Sunday after Easter—preached in 1669—pretends that "as true and false piety have a great number of actions in common, and as the external appearances of both are almost wholly similar, the traits with which false religion are depicted harm the true one." This, he says, happens "when they put upon the stage and expose to public mockery an imaginary, or even, if you like, a real hypocrite, and, by portraying him, turn into ridicule the holiest things, the fear for the judgments of God, the horror against sin, the most praiseworthy and the most Christian practices in themselves."[15]

It may not be amiss to state here that Bossuet, in the *Maximes et Réflexions sur la Comédie*, which were written in answer to the *Lettre d'un Théologien*, translated into French from the Italian of Father Caffaro, a Sicilian Theatine monk, defending the stage, and which *Maximes* were only published in 1694, twenty years after Molière's death, attacks Molière, and says: "We must then consider as honest the impieties and infamies with which the comedies of Molière are filled, and not count amongst the pieces, represented in the present times, those of an author who died, so to speak, before our eyes, and who even now fills the stage with the coarsest equivoques, with which the ears of Christians have ever been poisoned. . . . Only think if you will dare to maintain before Heaven plays in which virtue and piety are always ridiculed, corruption always excused and always made laughable." And speaking of Molière's death, that same eminent and charitable divine says: "Posterity will know, perhaps, the end of this author and comedian, who, in performing his *Malade Imaginaire*, or his *Médecin par force*, received the last stroke of that illness of which he died a few hours later, and passed from the jokes upon the stage, amongst which he almost breathed his last sigh, before the tribunal of Him who has said, 'Woe unto you that laugh now, ye shall weep.'"

The purpose of Molière's play is most powerfully defended by himself in his preface; and that he is now considered as having been right, is proved by its having taken a permanent

place on nearly every European stage; at least the stage of every country where hypocrites are found, men who use religion as a cloak in order to further their own personal or carnal designs.

The skill with which Molière has drawn the hypocrite of his time, a sensualist and a casuist, and the way in which, during two acts, he prepares and leads up to his appearance, are very great. Tartuffe's first scene with Elmire is described in plain, but not indelicate, language, of which the truth is for all ages; it is only surpassed by Tartuffe's second scene with Orgon's wife, in which he begins to show his suspicion, is extremely cautious and guarded, but at last, blinded by passion, falls into the trap laid for him. The blasphemous cant used by the hypocrite when he bares what he calls his soul in order to poison the air with the expression of his foul wishes, and at last says that "the greatest offense of sin lies in scandal and riot, but that it is no sin if you sin by stealth," is, and will be true at all times. The credulity of Orgon is thought by some to be very improbable; but can we go through the world without seeing every day examples of it? If there were no credulous people, how could political, religious, legal, medical, financial, commercial and, I am sorry to say, literary quacks, thrive nowadays so wonderfully well! The impetuous Damis, the sensible, clear-headed Cléante, the plain-spoken waiting-maid Dorine, the bigoted, infatuated Madam Pernelle, and the modest Elmire, are all drawn with masterly hand, and bear the impress of the genius which created them.

It may be interesting to give Napoléon I.'s opinion about *Tartuffe*, and about its performance having been prohibited: "After dinner," says Las-Cases in the *Mémorial de Saint Hélène*, "the Emperor read *Tartuffe* to us, but he was so tired that he could not finish it; he put down the book, and after having paid a just tribute of praise to Molière, he ended in a manner we did not expect, and said: 'Certainly the whole of *Tartuffe* is masterly; it is one of the best works of an inimitable man; however, this comedy has such a character that I am not at all astonished that its appearance upon the stage has been the subject of repeated negotiations at Versailles, and of much hesitation in the mind of Louis XIV. If I am astonished at anything, it is that the king allowed it to be performed. In my opinion it presents religious feelings under colors so odious; a certain scene is so decidedly and completely indecent, that, as regards myself, I do not hesitate to say that if that comedy had been written in my time, I would not have permitted it to be brought out.'"

M. Eugène Despois, the learned editor of Molière's plays, now in course of publication in Paris, says in *Le Théâtre francais sous Louis XIV.* that only since *Don Juan* and *Tartuffe* had been performed, did the clergy act rigidly against plays and actors, and brought into use laws which had long lain dormant. He also makes in the same book the following remarks about *Tartuffe*: "When we speak of this immortal picture of hypocrisy, we must at least be ourselves sincere, and not pretend to be astonished at the storm of anger raised by this comedy. It might be indeed supposed that only the Tartuffes were irritated, and that whoever said anything against that play showed himself a hypocrite. We do not know precisely what were the intentions of Molière, and if he himself knew them; but could he have any illusion about the import of his play? Nearly all those distinctions which Molière made between true

and false devotion, and which are still repeated about this comedy, disappeared; and just as Molière, in attacking much less serious things, the pretended *Précieuses*, might indeed expect that the real *Précieuses* would feel themselves attacked, so this twofold caricature of a sincere religious feeling in Orgon, and a lying religious feeling in Tartuffe gave rise to comparisons which Molière ought to have foreseen. We must be honest. I ask every sincere believer, whatever his creed may be,—religious, philosophical, or political,—would he be glad to see an opportunity given to his adversaries of confounding too easily what may be respectable in the convictions of some, comical or odious in those of others? Let us abandon for a moment the opinions which separate us: there is one, at least, which unites us all, at least in theory—patriotism which has also its Orgons and Tartuffes. What sincere patriot would not see an inconvenience in the portraying of the abuses, the absurdities, and even the hypocrisy of patriotism, at least as each one understands it for himself and his party? A sincere man, if he is accustomed to scrutinize his conscience, finds it difficult enough to understand the ideas of others, which he does not share, and expects to meet the same prepossessions, and to hear the name of calculated hypocrisy given to what perhaps is only his weakness or inconsistency. Yes, Bourdaloue and others, just as little suspected of resembling *Tartuffe*, had a right to be scandalized, and to consider that comedy dangerous. These cursory remarks are made only to excuse prepossessions, which were but too natural, and not an intolerance, and above all calumnies, which are never to be excused."

I shall only remark on this, that if the stage is intended "to hold the mirror up to nature," there can be no harm in showing up hypocrites, either social, religious, philosophical, or political. The real honest believer, the true philosopher, or the sincere patriot, are in nowise affected by these caricatures. As regards tolerance for the opinions of others which we do not share, this is a question of philosophy, but has nothing to do with comedy, or, if it has, it tends to destroy all comedy, which is nearly always the exposition of a folly, or of a vice made ridiculous; or, as Molière himself says in *The Impromptu of Versailles*,[14] "the business of comedy is to represent, in a general way, all the faults of men and especially of men of our day."

Monsieur Paul Albert, in his excellent work, *La Litérature francaise au 17e siècle*, says: "The endings of Molière's plays have often been criticised. As a general rule, he does not seem to care sufficiently about them; they arrive a little at haphazard, and because the play must have some ending or other. Some even are very far-fetched, and quite contrary to all rules of art, as, for example, the intervention of the *exempt* in *Tartuffe*. I do not know how the critics manage to get Molière out of this scrape, but I should like to be allowed to venture upon an explanation. The compulsory ending of every tragedy is the violent death of one of the personages; the compulsory ending of every comedy is a marriage: that was traditional, and exists even at the present time. As marriage was considered a happy ending, every comedy was to end well. But this could only happen when the hero, the very centre of the play, and the pivot on which the action turns, was either conquered, or would suddenly change his determination. In reality, he appears from the very first scenes as the most serious, the only obstacle to the union of the youthful lover and the fair object of

his love. He is opposed to it because his ruling passion, his egotism, is not satisfied by it. The Citizen who Apes the Nobleman, the Miser, the Hypochondriac, the Blue Stocking, the Devotee, repel a son-in-law who would not suit their daughter, because they wish for a son-in-law who would suit themselves, a noble, a rich man, a physician, a pedant, a devotee. How can one conquer that resistance, destroy that tyranny? Let us look at society: How are things going on there? At the present time, a young girl who is persecuted to marry some one whom she does not love, can always say 'nay' at the last moment, and the law protects her as well as it can; as soon as she is twenty years old, she can say 'yes' to whomsoever she likes, and without consulting any one.[15] It was not thus in the seventeenth century; it was necessary to yield or to enter a convent. This was one of the darkest sides of that society so much lauded. At every stage of it we find despotism. What has the comic poet to do? The rules of his art compel him to end his play with a marriage; but the reality which he has before his eyes gives the lie to the theory. Neither Orgon, M. Jourdain, Argan, nor Philaminte yield; the young girls are sacrificed. Is it, moreover, likely that, in so unequal a struggle, victory should belong to the weaker? The parents have on their side authority, custom, the inflexibility of a foregone conclusion, the violence of an exclusive passion; the poor child has only her tears and entreaties; very eloquent, it is true, and which, for one moment, move the hearts of the cruel parents, but the sacrifice is at last accomplished. Between the theatrical law, which prescribed a happy ending, and the social law, which presented another, Molière was obliged to take the first; but he took it so unwillingly, and so grumpily, if we may say so, that we can perceive that the second ending seemed to him to be the only true one. Here the thinker betrays himself, and the work, outwardly so light and lively, discovers gloomy depths. It seems that Molière cries to us: 'Do not believe in these happy endings; you see that they are unlikely, impossible. No, the officer will not interfere to prevent Orgon from being robbed, or Tartuffe from entering the house into which she has stolen, or, perhaps, even the bed of the daughter of his victim. Tartuffe is stronger than Orgon; Tartuffe will triumph. The fire from heaven will not fall upon Don Juan; the old legend says so, but Don Juan will quietly continue the course of his acts of scoundrelism, only he will put on the mask of religion, and, after having frightened people, he will edify them in order to deceive them better. The hypochondriac will not become a physician; that is a funny excuse which I have imagined to rid myself of a difficulty; he will take Diafoirus as his son-in-law, who will physic him for nothing. The Citizen who Apes the Nobleman will not be taken in by the farce of the Mamamouchi: he will give his daughter to a friend of Dorante, to some ruined nobleman, who will ruin him, and laugh at him. Above all, do not believe that Célimène's gallants will leave her, indignant at her coquettish actions; Célimène shall always have plenty of followers; the more treacherous she is, the greater will be the desire to please her; Alceste will come back the first, will throw himself at her feet, and beg her pardon; she will only know solitude when she will be old and wrinkled. Justice is not of this world, sincerity is not of this world; the strong and the wicked devour the good and the meek. Perhaps a poet will be born one day who will dare to show to society, society such as it is, but that day is yet far off! I moralize and make fun as well as I can, about marriage,

which is everything; in two hundred years people will moralize still, but will no longer make fun. You shall behold your miseries face to face, and that will kill all joy in you. Has Molière gone as far as this? I do not know. Who can pretend to set limits to the man who has written *The Misanthrope*, *Tartuffe*, *Don Juan?* For the last two hundred years the critics turn these strange works in and out, and in all directions, and have come to no conclusion as yet."

Goethe says, in his *Conversations*: "A piece to be so constructed as to be fit for the theatre, must be symbolical, that is to say, each incident must be insignificant in itself, and lead to another still more important. The *Tartuffe* of Molière is, in this respect, a great example. Only think what an introduction is the first scene! From the very beginning, everything is highly significant, and leads us to expect something still more important which is to come . . . ! that of the *Tartuffe* comes only once into the world . . . it is the greatest and best thing that exists of the kind."

In another part of his works, the great German author says: "The *Tartuffe* of Molière makes us hate him; he is a criminal who pretends, like a hypocrite, to be pious and moral, in order to ruin completely an honest family; the ending by a police officer is therefore quite natural, and very well received. Latterly, this piece has been played again, and brought forward because it served to show the underhand dealings of a certain class of men who threatened to pervert government. It was not the beauty and genius of the work which were felt and applauded; the play was only a hostile weapon; the different parties were engaged, the one wished to destroy the evils which the other tried to spread. That which appeared striking in the piece, was that the subject is still of the day, and that it will never lose its effect, on account of the art with which it has been treated."

Molière had the *Tartuffe* printed at his own cost, and corrected or wrote it so carefully, that there is hardly any difference between the first and the three following editions of this comedy.

The German dramatist, Karl Gutzkow, wrote, in 1844, a comedy in five acts, and in prose, called *Das Urbild des Tartuffe* (*The Exemplar of Tartuffe*), of which he admits that he planned it chiefly with a view to the circumstances which then took place in Germany, and to the severe measures which the Government and police took, at that time, to suppress all obnoxious ideas in print. With the exception of a complete neglect of all historical accuracy, this play is very good, and the intrigue depends chiefly on the interdiction to play the *Tartuffe*. The president, La Roquette, is the model of a Tartuffe, and he employs all the means in his power to prevent Molière's play from being performed. Molière, Louis XIV., and the minister of police, Lionne, are also chief characters in the German play, as well as La Chapelle, who, according to Gutzkow, is not the friend, but an envious enemy, of Molière. The king is in love with Armande Béjart, who is engaged to be married to Molière; he refuses his consent to the performance of *Tartuffe*, because he has been informed that the expected profits of the comedy will serve for the buying of the trousseau of Armande. He gives his consent at last, because the actress has promised to wear a blue neckerchief, if she will lend a favorable ear to his wishes, and in the contrary case a yellow one; and *Tartuffe* is

the only play which is ready to be acted in which she can wear a neckerchief. In the fifth act, which takes place in the ante-chamber of the king's private box in the theatre, Molière wears the dress of La Roquette, and is mistaken for him, whilst the president is mistaken for the actor; Armande refuses to listen to Louis XIV., who consoles himself with the thought of encouraging, in his own peculiar way, the budding talents and charms of her younger sister, Madeleine. *Tartuffe* is a success, and the hypocrite La Roquette ends the play with the following words: "They may drive us away like wolves: we come back like foxes. Revenge yourselves! Revenge yourselves! We shall do the same. (*In a very humble voice.*) I shall enter the order of Jesuits."

Goldoni, the Italian dramatist, wrote also a play called *Molière*, of which he gives an outline in his *Autobiography*, where he says: "I was acquainted with Molière, and respected this master of the art as highly as the Piedmontese, and I was seized instantly with a desire to give them a convincing proof of it. I immediately composed a comedy in five acts, and in verse, without masks or change of scene, of which the title and principal subject were Molière himself. The argument was taken from two anecdotes of his private life; the one, his projected marriage with Isabelle, the daughter of Béjart; and the other, the prohibition of his *Tartuffe*. These two historical facts accord so well together, that the unity of action is perfectly observed. The impostors of Paris, alarmed at the comedy of Molière, knew that the author had sent to the camp, where Louis XIV. then was, to obtain permission for its representation, and they were afraid lest the revocation of the prohibition should be obtained.

"I employed in my piece a person of the name of Pirlon, a hypocrite in every sense of the word, who introduces himself into the author's house, discovers to La Béjart Molière's love for her daughter, of which she was yet ignorant, engages her to quit her companion and director; behaves in the same manner to Isabelle, holding up to her the situation of an actress as the road to perdition, and endeavors to seduce La Foret, their waiting-woman, who, more adroit than her mistresses, dupes the duper, inspires him with a love for her, and takes his cloak and hat from him to give to Molière, who appears on the stage with the dress of the impostor. I was bold enough to exhibit it in my piece, a much more marked hypocrite than that of Molière; but hypocrites had then lost a great deal of their ancient credit in Italy.

"During the interval between the fourth and last act of my comedy, the *Tartuffe* of Molière is acted in the theatre of the Hotel de Bourgogne; all the characters of my piece make their appearance in the fifth act, for the purpose of complimenting Molière; Pirlon, concealed in a closet, where he was expecting La Foret, is forced to come forth in the presence of the spectators, and is assailed with the sarcasms which he so richly deserved; and Molière, to add to his joy and happiness, marries Isabelle, in spite of the mother, who aspired to the conquest of her future son-in-law.

"In this piece are to be found several details of the life of Molière. The character of Valerio is Baron, an actor of Molière's company. Leander is a copy of La Chapelle, a friend of the author, and often mentioned in the account of his life . . . This work is in verse . . . As the subject was a French author, who wrote largely in that style, it became necessary to imitate him."

I have read Goldoni's play, and do not think that he has either succeeded in giving a good idea of the character of Molière, or of a hypocrite. Molière, in the Italian play, in a conversation with Valerio (Act IV., Scene 8), says: "Philosophy teaches us, and experience proves it to us, that no other love exists here below but self-love." This is certainly not in conformity with Molière's life. Pirlon, the hypocrite, when discovered repents, and begs pardon on his knees; and this also Tartuffe would not have done. Mercier has remodeled and altered the *Molière* of Goldoni for the French stage, where it was represented, but it did not meet with much success.

In the fifth volume of the Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, is found a translation of *Tartuffe*, under the name of *The Impostor*, written by Mr. Martin Clare, a schoolmaster. He dedicates it to Mr. Wyndham, of Clower-Wall, in Gloucestershire, who appears to have had "a very promising eldest son," a pupil of the pedagogue, and who was going to play a part in the translation of Molière's comedy. Unforeseen circumstances prevented this piece being brought out; but Mr. Clare—I suppose with an eye to future favors—says that the young gentleman would, he knows, have done "great justice to any one of the parts." Mr. Clare might, like Hamlet, exclaim, "O my prophetic soul!" The dedication is as follows:

SIR,—I take leave to offer You the Fruit of a few leisure Hours, spent in translating one of the most celebrated pieces of the famous *Molière*. It was first intended to be exhibited as a publick Exercise by my YOUNG GENTLEMAN in which Your very promising eldest son, whose Tuition You have been pleased to intrust me with, would, I know, do great Justice to any one of the Parts but on Account of the useful Publication of this excellent Comic Writer, I am inclin'd to send it into the world under Your Patronage and Protection.

The Original has occasionally given Offence to the Body of Zealots and Hypocrites in *France*, and wherever else their Numbers were considerable: but from its intrinsick Merit, the Truth of the Drawing, and Justness of the colouring, this particular Piece has never wanted for Patrons, among Persons of the greatest Sense, Virtue, Learning, and Taste, to support it against the violent Opposition it has met with.

What Success the Translation may have I cannot foresee. But as it is thrown under the Guardianship of a Gentleman, who, both in Publick and private Life, has always been a profess'd Enemy to Artifice, Disguise and Fraud, I am encourag'd to hope, that a moderate Version of a Piece, wherein those Vices are finely expos'd will not be, for Your sake, ill received by the Publick. I am with great Regard, SIR, *Your most Obliged, and Obedient, Humble Servant,* MARTIN CLARE.

Academy in *Soho Square, London, July 25, 1732.*

There is also a Prologue to Mr. Clare's *Impostor*, spoken by a young gentleman of the Academy in Soho Square, when acted there in the year 1726; and an Epilogue spoken by another young gentleman in the character of "Madam Paruelle," which I doubt very much if any schoolmaster would let one of his pupils recite at the present time.

Matthew Medbourne, an actor of considerable eminence, belonging to the Duke of York's theatre in the reign of King Charles II., wrote a translation, in blank verse, of the *Tartuffe*, which he dedicated to the Right Honorable Henry, Lord Howard of Norfolk. The translator, a Roman Catholic, seems to have been accused, by the well-known Dr. Titus Oates, of complicity in the supposed Catholic plot, for he was imprisoned, and died in Newgate in 1679. His translation, called *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan*—Puritan stands for Huguenot-

was acted at the Theatre-Royal, 1670, and, according to the author's account, seems to have met with great success. There are several new scenes added in the English play which are not found in the original comedy, and which certainly do not improve it. They are the following:—At the end of the first act of *The French Puritan*, Laurence, Tartuffe's man-servant, and Dorina, the waiting-maid, meet; he behaves rather rudely to her; but she discovers that he is not a servant, but a confederate of his supposed master, because he addresses the latter only by his name. Tartuffe, who, in the original play, does not appear until the second scene of the third act, in this translation, "passes (now) over the stage in a demure posture." In the fifth scene of the second act of the English play, Laurence confesses to Dorina that he is not so holy as he seems, and in order to prove it sings a very indecent song. In the eighth scene of the third act Tartuffe unfolds his plans broadly to Laurence; whilst, in the ninth scene of the same act, Madam Pernelle expresses her delight to "Flypote" that her grandson is disinherited in favor of Tartuffe. In the second scene of the fourth act, Laurence advises Dorina to procure a meeting between Elmire and Tartuffe, and to let Orgon be a secret witness of it. In the original French play, Elmire plans the meeting herself. The fifth act of *The French Puritan* differs also from Molière's comedy; Laurence betrays his master, and produces the cabinet and writings which Tartuffe had appropriated; and then all the characters of the play end with a dance!

Crowne wrote a play, *The English Friar*, acted in 1690, of which the hypocrite, Father Finical, is certainly suggested by Tartuffe. Nobody can read the last scene of the fifth act of the English play without becoming convinced of this. Some of the very words of Tartuffe, Crowne puts into Finical's mouth.

The Nonjuror, a very successful comedy, by Colley Cibber, acted at Drury Lane, December 6th, 1717. is another imitation of *Tartuffe*. In the dedication to the king, Cibber, with an eye to business, says that "the Sullen and Disaffected, . . . for want of proper Amusement, often enter into Wild and Seditious Schemes to reform." Of course, the most proper amusement is the theatre, and to prove this further, he says: "It has even discovered the strength and number to be much less than may have been artfully insinuated, . . . of which your Majesty may have lately seen an instance, in the insuppressible acclamations that were given on your appearing to honor this play with your royal presence." For this dedication, Cibber received two hundred pounds from George I. Dr. Wolff is a close copy from the French original, although the English dramatist says (in his *Apology*) that it was his intention to portray "an English popish priest lurking under the doctrine of our own church, to raise his fortune upon the ruin of a worthy gentleman, whom his dissembled sanctity had seduced into the treasonable cause of a Roman Catholic outlaw." The parts of Dorina, the waiting-maid, Cléante, and Madam Pernelle are omitted; but that of Marianne (Maria) is improved, and has been made one of the best coquettes on the stage. Cibber has been accused of having stolen the plot, characters, incidents, and most part of the language from Medbourne; but this is untrue. What he has taken from him is the servant Charles (Laurence), who also betrays his master. The Prologue of *The Nonjuror*, written by Rowe, is chiefly addressed to the Jacobites, and ends thus:

"Ship off, ye Slaves, and seek some passive Land,
Where Tyrants after your own Hearts command,
To your Transalpine Master's Rule resort,
And fill an empty abdicated Court.
Turn your Possessions here to ready Rhino,
And buy ye Lands and Lordships at Urbino."

Macaulay, in his *History of England*, 8vo, 1855, Vol. III., ch. xiv., "General character of the Nonjuring Clergy," states: "The public voice loudly accused many nonjurors of requiting the hospitality of their benefactors with villainy as black as that of the hypocrite depicted in the masterpiece of Molière. Indeed, when Cibber undertook to adapt that noble comedy to the English stage, he made his Tartuffe a nonjuror; and Johnson, who cannot be supposed to have been prejudiced against the nonjurors, frankly owned that Cibber had done them no wrong."

According to Maidment and Logan's Introductory Notice to *The English Friar*, Cibber owed a great deal of his success to Crowne's play: "For instance, Father Finical becomes a bishop, so does Dr. Wolff: both priests are of an amorous complexion; Finical courts the maid, Wolff the mistress, both are detected, and pretty much in the same manner. The *Biographia Dramatica* says: 'The Coquet Maria is truly original, and most elegantly spirited;' is not this precisely the character of Laura, the eldest daughter of Lord Stately, who is described amongst the *Dramatis Personæ* 'a great Gallant and Coquet?' Not to multiply points of resemblance, it is plain that Cibber had some remembrance of *The English Friar* when he was preparing the *Nonjuror* for the stage."

It is said that Pope wrote "a Compleate Key to *The Nonjuror*" under the name of Joseph Guy, in which a comparison is drawn—and not in the choicest language—between Molière's *Tartuffe* and Cibber's *Nonjuror*, greatly—and justly so—to the disadvantage of the latter. Among other compliments, it is said: "Mr. Cibber did not want an old woman to strengthen the bigotry of her weak son (Cibber had not plagiarized Madam Pernelle), and therefore has made that son a very old woman."

On June 20th, 1718, Medbourne's translation of *Tartuffe*, which had not been acted for thirty years, was performed at Lincoln's Inn-Fields, with a Prologue, said to be written by Pope in imitation of Rowe, and ending almost in his very words, thus:

"Ship off, ye Saints, and seek some righteous Land,
Where Pastors after your own Hearts command;
Like Criminals adjudg'd to leave the nation,
Go, take the Benefit of Transportation.
Turn your possessions here to ready Rhino,
And Preach abroad by *Jure non Divino*."

Isaac Bickerstaffe altered Colley Cibber's play and called it *The Hypocrite*, which was acted at Drury Lane on the 17th of November, 1768. This is *The Nonjuror*, with the names altered, the bitter attacks against Jacobites and Nonjurors, and a good deal of the spirit left

out, Madam Pernelle (old Lady Lambert), from *Tartuffe*, added, and a new character,—which I venture to think very vulgar,—Mawworm, inserted. The hypocrite is called Dr. Cantwell, the credulous Orgon, Sir John Lambert, and the coquette, Charlotte.

Sheridan, in *The School for Scandal*, has partly imitated Tartuffe in Joseph Surface, and the third scene of the fourth act of his play seems to me based upon the fifth scene of the fourth act of *Tartuffe*; it is only based upon, not borrowed from, Molière.

Mr. John Oxenford, the eminent theatrical critic, has also written a translation of *Tartuffe*, in blank verse, which was performed, with great success, some years ago, at the Adelphi Theatre, London; this play has never been printed.

NOTES

[1] Translated by Mr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Savage, and others. London, 1727.

[2] It is odd that *fungus*, in Latin, a mushroom, also means "a dolt;" so the Italian *zucca*, a pumpkin, is employed in the same way. The French *un melon*, *un concombre*, *un cornichon*, a gherkin, and *une citronille*, a pumpkin, all vegetables which are watery and faint in taste, are often used to characterize a person of weak intellect.

[3] This petition is a reply to the pamphlet *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and is often quoted by de Rochemont in his *Observations* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*, Vol. V.).

[4] This situation was that of manager of the troupe of the theatre of the Palais-Royal.

[5] See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*, Vol. IV.

[6] This refers to *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and Molière quotes all the phrases from that pamphlet.

[7] Molière imitates here the language of his accuser, de Roules.

[8] This presupposes that Molière intended to make originally a clergyman of Tartuffe.

[9] Molière speaks here of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon, who had forbidden *Tartuffe* to be played.

[10] This phrase is nearly word for word what the Prince de Condé replied to Louis XIV. with regard to *Scaramouch, a hermit*. In the Preface to *Tartuffe*, which was printed two years after this petition had been presented, Molière names the Prince (see page 36).

[11] The following is the mode in which the *Registres de la Comédie-Francaise* (see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. IV.) record the presentation of this petition: "The following day, the 6th, a tipstaff, from the Court of Parliament, came in the name of the first President, M. de Lamoignon, to forbid the piece. The 8th, the Sieur de la Thorillière and I, de la Grange, started by post from Paris to obtain an audience from the king respecting said prohibit. His Majesty was at the siege of Lille in Flanders, where we were very well received. *Monsieur* gave us his protection as usual, and His Majesty sent us word that, at his return to Paris, he would have the comedy of *Tartuffe* examined, and that we should play it. After this, we came back. The journey cost a thousand francs to the company. They did not play during our voyage, and we resumed acting the 25th of September.

[12] His name was Mauvillain, according to Grimarest. It was in speaking of Mauvillain that Louis XIV. said one day to Molière: "You have got a physician, what does he do to you?" "Sire," answered Molière, "we chat together; he prescribes remedies; I do not take them, and I get better." M. Maurice Raynaud, in *les médecins au temps de Molière*, says: "Mauvillain had numerous friends amongst the Faculty. He showed some talents as professor of botany, and later, assisted Fagon in the *Hortus regius*. The theses defended, whilst

he was president, and inspired by him, possess generally a twofold character. They either are in praise of chemistry,—and here we recognize a former pupil of Montpellier, wholly devoted to the prescribing of many drugs, praising the singular virtues of the rhinoceros' horn, of the sapphire, the emerald, the besoar, and above all, of antimony, and making great fun of the antiquated partisans of senna and syrup of pale roses,—or are about some facetious subject like: *An pallidis virginum coloribus Venus*, giving scope to all kinds of equivocal sayings or broad jokes, told in very good Latin. All this seems to show us a man of very independent character, very jovial, very irritable, naturally inclined to opposition, and, in the quarrels of the school of medicine, acting the part of the leader of a party." Molière obtained the canonry he asked for the son of this physician. Let me draw attention to the free and easy style in which Molière addresses the king.

[13] Bourdaloue seems not to have remembered the saying of Cléante (Act I., Scene 6) to Orgon—" There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage . . . I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or beautiful than the holy fervor of sincere piety: so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot."

[14] See *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. IV., Scene 3. See also what Molière says in the same play about the subjects for comedy, page 27.

[15] Before the first French Revolution, marriage in France could take place only in church, and the priest could refuse or grant it; now only the civil marriage is legal. But every child, whose parents are alive, must have their permission even now (1877), before he or she can legally marry; and only when a young man is twenty-three and a young girl twenty years old, can they compel their parents to give them that permission, by sending to them a legal officer with what is oddly enough called *une sommation respectueuse*.

PREFACE[1]

This is a comedy about which there has been a great deal of noise, which has been for a long time persecuted; and the people whom it holds up have well shown that they are the most powerful in France of all those whom I have hitherto portrayed. The marquises, the blue stockings, the cuckolds and the doctors, have quietly suffered themselves to be represented, and have pretended to be amused, in common with all the world, at the sketches which I have made of them; but the hypocrites have not taken the joke. At first they were somewhat amazed, and found it strange that I should have had the presumption to make free with their grimaces, and wish to decry a trade much indulged in by honest people. It is a crime which they could not pardon me, and they have all risen up in arms against my comedy with a terrible fury. They took particular care not to attack it from a point of view where it wounded them—they have too much policy for that, and are too knowing to lay bare the bottoms of their hearts. In accordance with their laudable customs, they have concealed their interests beneath the cloak of God's cause; and to listen to them, *The Tartuffe* is a piece that offends piety. It is, from beginning to end, full of abominations, and nothing is found in it but what deserves the fire. Every syllable in it is impious; the gesticulations themselves are criminal; and the least glance of the eye, the slightest shake of the head, conceal mysteries which they find means to explain to my disadvantage.

Of little avail was it to submit it to the criticism of my friends, and to the censorship of the public; the corrections which I have made, the judgment of the king and the queen, who have seen it; the approbation of the great princes and the great ministers, who honored the performance with their presence; the testimony of people of worth, who found it instructing—all this was of no use. They will not abate one jot; and they still continue, every day, to set their indiscreet zealots on me in public, who piously load me with insults, and charitably consign me to perdition.

I would care very little for what they could say, were it not for their artfulness in bringing people whom I respect to be at enmity with me, and in enlisting among their ranks the truly good, whose good faith they take advantage of, and who, by the warmth of their interest in the cause of Heaven, are apt to receive the impressions which they wish to give them. It is

this which compels me to defend myself. It is with the truly pious that I everywhere wish to justify myself as to the arrangement of my comedy; and I implore them, with all my heart, not to condemn things before they have seen them, to divest themselves of all bias, and not to be the tool of the passions of those whose grimaces are a disgrace to them.

If they will take the trouble to examine my comedy in good faith, they will perceive, doubtless, the honesty of my intentions everywhere, and that it is not intended to hold sacred things up to ridicule; that I have treated it with every precaution which the delicacy of the subject required; and that I have employed every possible art and care plainly to show the difference between the character of the hypocrite and that of the truly devout. For this purpose I have devoted two entire acts to prepare my audience for the advent of my scoundrel. He does not make the spectator waver for an instant; he is known immediately by the marks which I have given him; and, from first to last, he does not utter a word, nor make a movement, but what depicts to the beholder the character of a wicked man, in violent contrast to the really good one whom I have placed in opposition to him.

I am well aware that, in reply, those gentlemen have endeavored to insinuate that the stage is not fit for the discussion of these subjects; but, by their leave, I ask them upon what they base this beautiful maxim. It is a theory which they only advance, and which they do not prove by any means; and it would, doubtless, not be difficult to show them that with the ancients comedy derived its origin from religion, and was a part of their mysteries; that the Spaniards, our neighbors, never celebrate a feast in which comedy is not mixed up; and that, even among us, it owes its birth to the cares of a brotherhood to which the hôtel de Bourgogne still belongs; that it was a place given to them to represent in it the most important mysteries of our faith; that comedies printed in Gothic characters, under the name of a doctor of the Sorbonne, may still be seen there; and, without carrying the matter so far, that, in our days, sacred pieces of M. de Corneille[2] have been performed, which were the admiration of the whole of France. If it be the aim of comedy to correct man's vices, then I do not see for what reason there should be a privileged class. Such a one is, in the State, decidedly more dangerous in its consequences than any other; and we have seen that the stage possesses a great virtue as a corrective medium. The most beautiful passages in a serious moral are most frequently less powerful than those of a satire; and nothing admonishes the majority of people better than the portrayal of their faults. To expose vices to the ridicule of all the world is a severe blow to them. Reprehensions are easily suffered, but not so ridicule. People do not mind being wicked; but they object to being made ridiculous.

The reproach against me is that I have put pious terms in the mouth of my impostor. How could I avoid it, wishing to represent the character of a hypocrite accurately? It is sufficient, I think, that I show the criminal motives which make him say these things, and that I have eliminated from them the sacred terms, the bad use of which might have caused pain.[3] "But in the fourth act he gives vent to a pernicious moral." But has not this moral been dinned into everybody's ears?[4] Does it say aught that is new in my comedy? And is there any fear that things so universally detested shall leave any impression on men's minds? that I can make them dangerous by introducing them on the stage; that they are likely to

receive any authority from the lips of a scoundrel? There is not the least indication of that; and one ought to approve the comedy of *Tartuffe*, or condemn all comedies wholesale.

It is that which people have attacked furiously of late; and never has the stage been so furiously tilted at. I cannot deny that there have been Fathers of the Church who have condemned comedy; but neither can it be denied to me that there have been some who have treated it more leniently. Thus the authority upon which people seek to found their censorship is destroyed by this division; and all that can be deduced from this diversity of opinions in equally enlightened minds, is that they have regarded comedy from a different point of view, and that while some have looked at it in its purifying influence, others have considered it in its corrupting tendency, and confounded it with those vile spectacles, rightly named exhibitions of turpitude.

And in fact, since we have to argue upon things, and not upon words; and that the majority of contradictions cannot well be reconciled, and that the same word often envelops two opposite meanings, we have but to lift the veil of the equivocal, and to look what comedy is in itself, to see whether it is to be condemned. It is, doubtless, well known that, being nothing else but an ingenious poem, which, by its agreeable teaching, seeks to point out the faults of mankind, it does not deserve to be so unjustly censured; and if we may listen on that point to the testimony of antiquity, it will tell us that her most famous philosophers have eulogized comedy; they who professed such austere wisdom, and who were incessantly decrying the vices of their age. It will show us that Aristotle devoted many of his vigils to the theatre, and took the trouble to reduce to precept the art of constructing comedies. It will teach us that her greatest men, foremost in dignity, have gloried in composing some themselves; that there were others who did not disdain to recite in public those which they had composed; that Greece proclaimed her appreciation of that art by the glorious prizes she awarded to, and the magnificent theatres she built in honor of, it; and lastly, that in Rome this same art was crowned with extraordinary honors. I do not say in debauched Rome, under the licentious emperors, but in disciplined Rome, under the wisdom of her consuls, and at the most vigorous period of Roman virtue.

I admit that there have been times in which comedy became corrupt. And what is there in this world that does not become corrupt every day? There is nothing so pure but what mankind can bring crime to bear upon it; no art so salutary but what they can reverse its intentions; nothing so good in itself but what they can turn to a bad use. Medicine is a profitable art, and every one esteems it as one of the most excellent things in existence; and yet there have been periods in which it has made itself odious, and has often been used to poison people. Philosophy is a gift of Heaven; it was given to us to lead our minds to the knowledge of God by the contemplation of nature's wonders; still we are not unaware that it has often been diverted from its use, and employed openly to support impiety. Even the most sacred things are not safe from men's corruption; and we see the greatest scoundrels daily abusing piety, and wickedly making it the tool for the most abominable crimes. But for all that, we do not fail to make those distinctions which it is right we should make. We do not envelop in the same warp of a false deduction the good of the thing corrupted with the malice of the

corrupter. We always separate the bad use from the honest intention of art, and no more than we would dream of defending the banishment of medicine from Rome, or the public condemnation of philosophy at Athens, ought we to put a veto upon comedy for having been censured at certain times. This censuring had its reasons, which have no existence here. It confined itself strictly to what it saw; and we ought, therefore, not to drag it beyond the limits which it has adopted, extend it farther than necessary, or make it class the guilty with the innocent. The comedy which it designed to attack is not at all the comedy which we wish to defend. We must take good care not to confound the one with the other. They are two persons whose morals are totally opposed. They bear no relation to each other except the resemblance of the name; and it would be a crying injustice to wish to condemn Olympia, who is an honest woman, because there was another Olympia, who was a loose character.[5] Such verdicts would, doubtless, produce a great disorder in the world. Everything would be open to condemnation; and, since this rigor is not carried out with reference to all other things which are daily abused, we ought to extend the same grace to comedy, and approve those plays in which instruction and honesty are made manifest.

I am well aware that there are certain minds whose delicacy can tolerate no comedy whatsoever; who say that the most honest ones are the most dangerous; that the passions which they depict are so much the more touching because they are full of virtue; and that people are too much affected by this kind of representations. I do not see any great crime in becoming affected at the sight of an honorable passion, or that the complete state of insensibility to which they would elevate our feelings would indicate a high standard of virtue. I am inclined to doubt whether such great perfection be in the power of human nature, and whether it would not be better to endeavor to rectify and mollify men's passions, than to eliminate them altogether. I admit that there are places which it would be more salutary to frequent than theatres; and if we take it for granted that all things that do not directly concern God and our salvation are reprehensible, then it becomes certain that comedy should be one of them, and I for one could not object that it should be condemned among the rest. But let us suppose, as it is true, that there must be intervals to pious devotions, and that we have need of amusement during that time, when I maintain that nothing more innocent than comedy could be found. I have digressed too far. Let me wind up with the remark of a great prince[6] on the comedy of *Tartuffe*. A week after it had been forbidden, there was performed before the court a piece entitled *Scaramouch, a hermit*,[7] and the king, coming out of the theatre, said to the prince of whom I have just spoken: "I should like to know why the people who are so very much shocked at the comedy of Molière do not say a word about *Scaramouch*;" to which the prince answered: "The reason of that is, that the comedy of *Scaramouch* makes game of Heaven and religion, about which these gentlemen care very little; but Molière's makes game of them; it is that which they cannot tolerate."

NOTES

[1] This Preface was written for the first edition of the *Tartuffe*, in 1669, and is therefore posterior to the petitions given in the Introductory Notice to this play.

[2] *Polyeucte*, and *Théodore, virgin and martyr.*

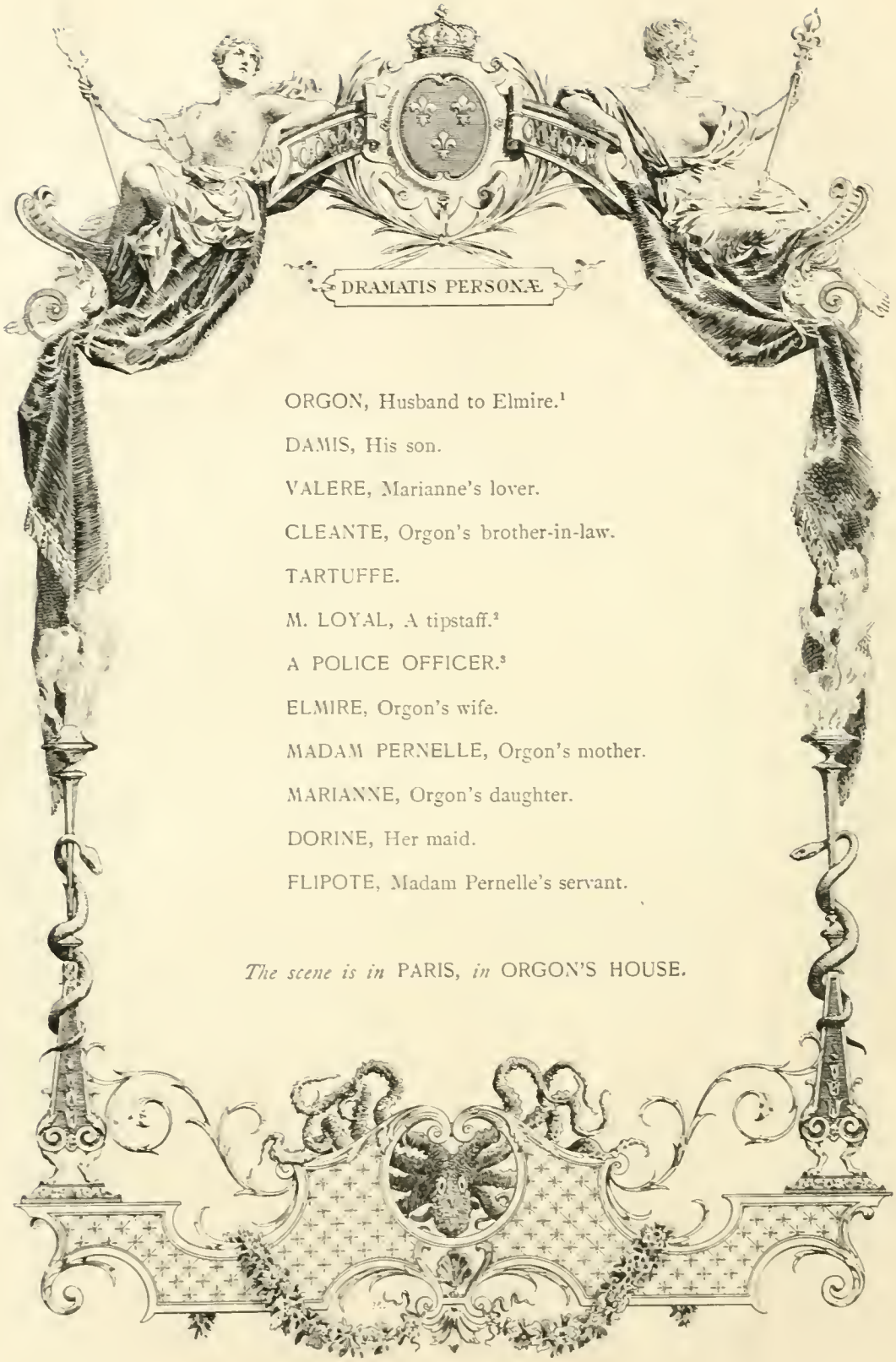
[3] Molière alludes here to a line of *Tartuffe*, in the eighth scene of the third act, which was in the first representation, "Forgive him, O Heaven! as I forgive him."

[4] Molière speaks of the false casuistical morals attacked by Pascal in the seventh *Provinciale.*

[5] It has been said that Molière, in mentioning the name of Olympia, wished to hit at Olympia Maldachini, a sister-in-law of Pope Innocent X. This pope died in 1655, and was the author of the bull against the five propositions of Jansenius. The life of the lady, who was far from a saint, had only lately been translated from the Italian into French.

[6] The Prince de Condé.

[7] The farce of *Scaramouch, a hermit*, contained many indecent situations; amongst others, that of a monk entering by the balcony into the house of a married woman, and reappearing from time to time before the public, saying: "*Questo e per morti ficar la carne.*"



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ORGON, Husband to Elmire.[1]

DAMIS, His son.

VALERE, Marianne's lover.

CLEANTE, Orgon's brother-in-law.

TARTUFFE.

M. LOYAL, A tipstaff.[2]

A POLICE OFFICER.[3]

ELMIRE, Orgon's wife.

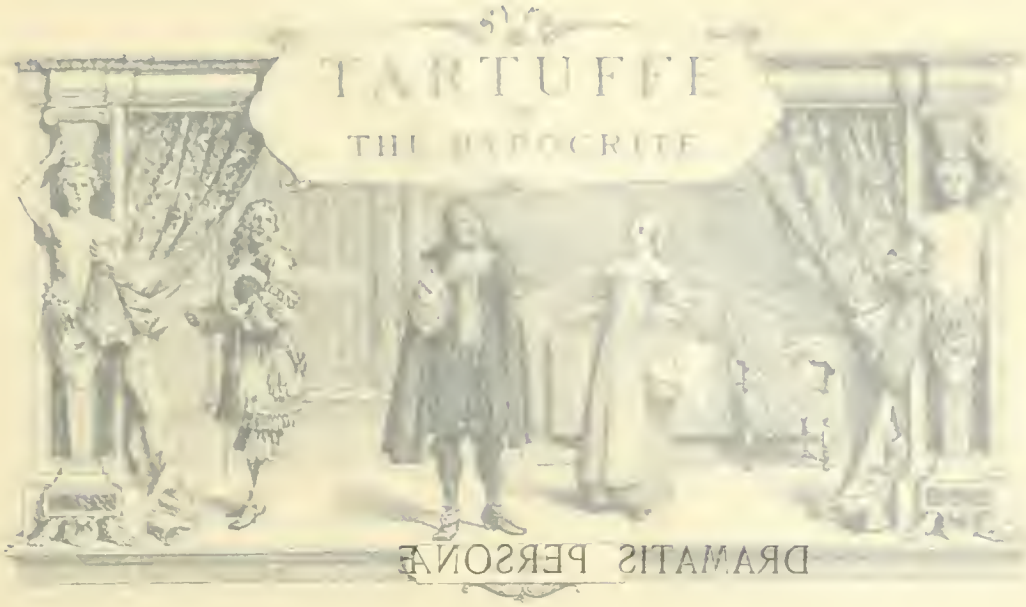
MADAM PERNELLE, Orgon's mother.

MARIANNE, Orgon's daughter.

DORINE, Her maid.

FLIPOTE, Madam Pernelle's servant.

The scene is in PARIS, *in* ORGON'S HOUSE.


TARTUFFE
THE HYPOCRITE

MAURICE LELOIR, DEL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MARIANNE, CLEANTE, DAMIS, DOLINE, FLIPOTE.

M. PER. Come along, Flipote, come along; let us go [illegible].

ELM. You walk so fast, that one can hardly keep up with you.

M. PER. Do not trouble yourself, daughter-in-law, do not trouble yourself, do not come any farther; there is no need for all this ceremony.

ELM. We only give you your due. But pray, mother, why are you in such haste to leave us?

M. PER. Because I cannot bear to see [illegible] goings on. No one cares to please [illegible]

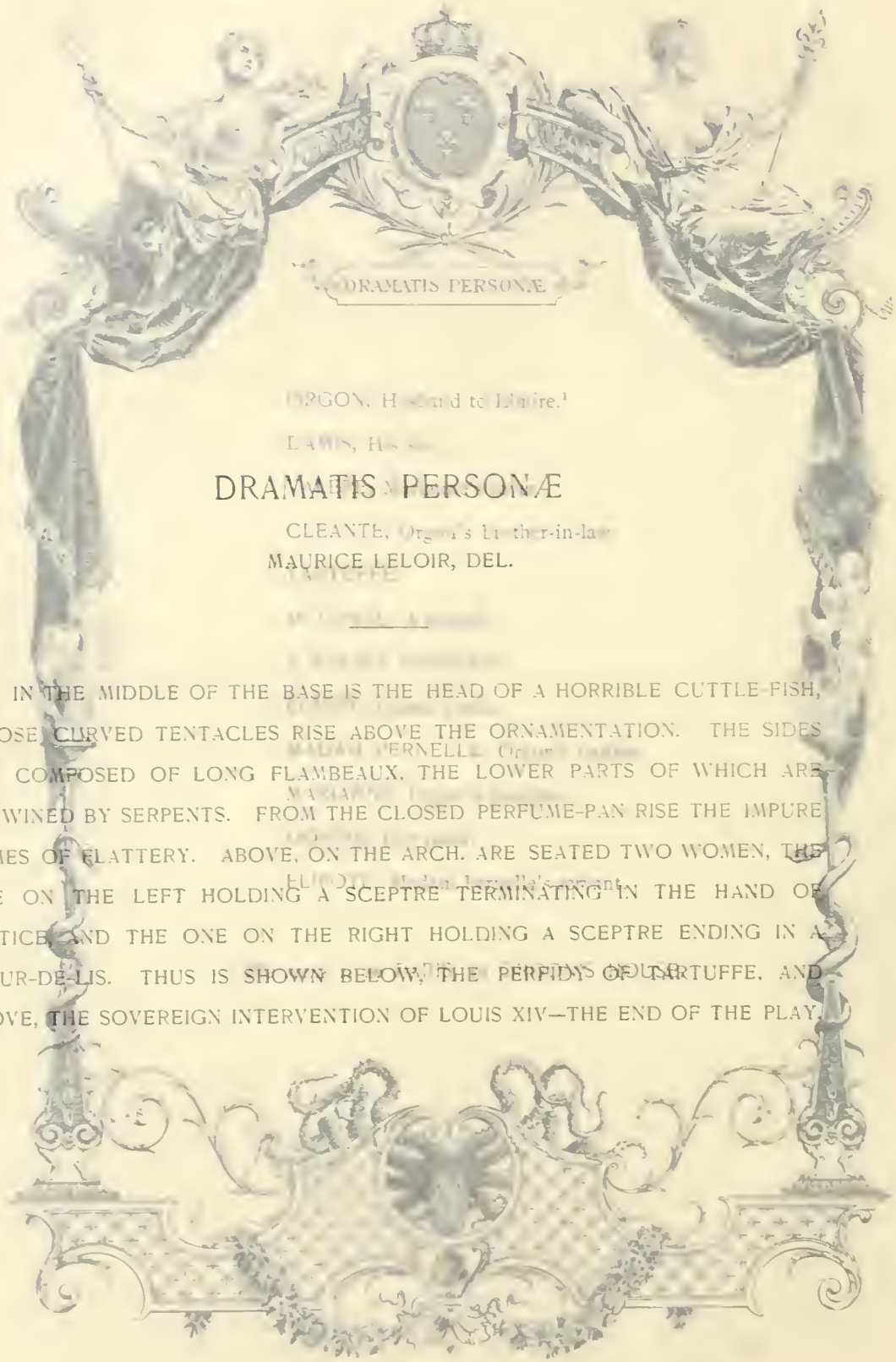
[illegible] advice is d[illegible] everyone has [illegible] the [illegible]

[illegible]

M. PER. [illegible] much of [illegible] for a wa[illegible] You [illegible] about [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] letters [illegible] I [illegible] and I have [illegible] your father. [illegible] just becoming [illegible] give him [illegible]

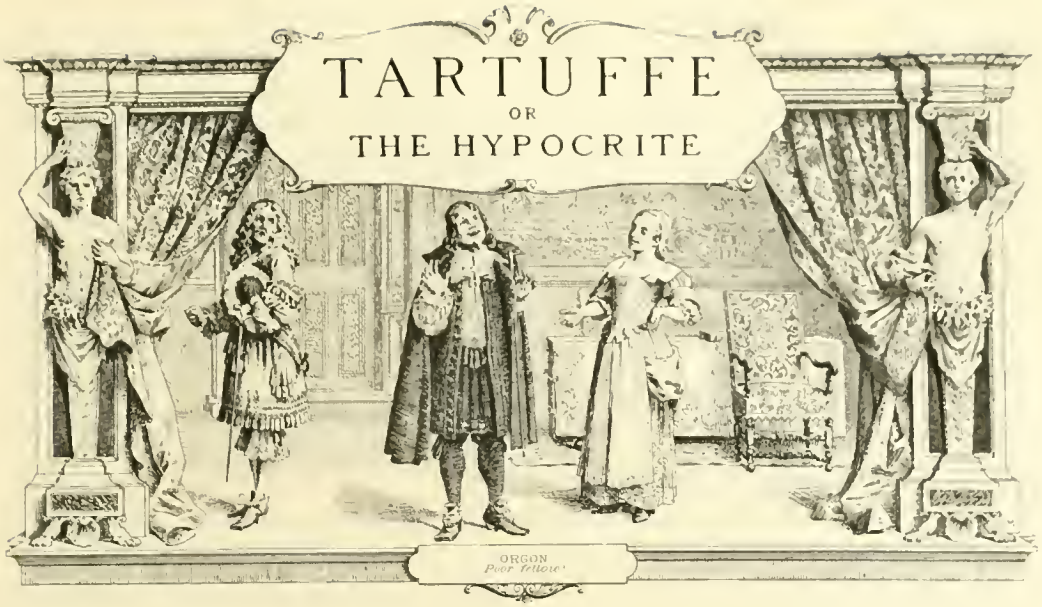


DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLEANTE, Orgon's brother-in-law

MAURICE LELOIR, DEL.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BASE IS THE HEAD OF A HORRIBLE CUTTLE-FISH, WHOSE CURVED TENTACLES RISE ABOVE THE ORNAMENTATION. THE SIDES ARE COMPOSED OF LONG FLAMBEAUX, THE LOWER PARTS OF WHICH ARE ENTWINED BY SERPENTS. FROM THE CLOSED PERFUME-PAN RISE THE IMPURE FUMES OF FLATTERY. ABOVE, ON THE ARCH, ARE SEATED TWO WOMEN, THE ONE ON THE LEFT HOLDING A SCEPTRE TERMINATING IN THE HAND OF JUSTICE, AND THE ONE ON THE RIGHT HOLDING A SCEPTRE ENDING IN A FLEUR-DE-LIS. THUS IS SHOWN BELOW, THE PERFIDY OF TARTUFFE, AND ABOVE, THE SOVEREIGN INTERVENTION OF LOUIS XIV—THE END OF THE PLAY.



ACT I.

SCENE I. — MADAM PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLEANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, FLIPOTE.

M. PER. Come along, Flipote, come along; let us get rid of them.

ELM. You walk so fast, that one can hardly keep up with you.

M. PER. Do not trouble yourself, daughter-in-law, do not trouble yourself, do not come any farther; there is no need for all this ceremony.

ELM. We only give you your due. But pray, mother, why are you in such haste to leave us?

M. PER. Because I cannot bear to see such goings on. No one cares to please me. I leave your house very little edified: all my advice is despised; nothing is respected, everyone has his say aloud, and it is just like the court of King Pétaud.[4]

DOR. If . . .

M. PER. You are, my dear, a little too much of a talker, and a great deal too saucy for a waiting maid. You give your advice about everything.

DAM. But . . .

M. PER. Four letters spell your name, my child, a "fool:" I, your grandmother, tell you so; and I have already predicted to my son, your father, a hundred times, that you are fast becoming a good-for-nothing, who will give him naught but trouble.

MAR. I think . . .

M. PER. Good-lack! grand-daughter, you play the prude, and to look at you, butter would not melt in your mouth. But still waters run deep, as the saying is; and I do not like your sly doings at all.

ELM. But, mother . . .

M. PER. By your leave, daughter-in-law, your whole conduct is altogether wrong; you ought to set them a good example; and their late mother managed them a great deal better. You are extravagant; and it disgusts me to see you decked out like a princess.[5] The woman who wishes to please her husband only, daughter-in-law, has no need of so much finery.

CLE. But after all, madam . . .

M. PER. As for you, sir, who are her brother, I esteem, love, and respect you very much; but, nevertheless, if I were my son and her husband, I would beg of you earnestly not to enter our house. You are always laying down maxims which respectable people ought not to follow. I speak to you rather frankly; but it is a way I have got, and I do not mince my words when I have something on my mind.

DAM. Your Mr. Tartuffe is an angel, no doubt . . .

M. PER. He is a very worthy man, who ought to be listened to; and I cannot, without getting angry, suffer him to be sneered at by a fool like you.

DAM. What! am I to allow a censorious bigot to usurp an absolute authority in this house! and shall we not be permitted to amuse ourselves, unless that precious gentleman condescends to give us leave!

DOR. If anyone were to listen to him and believe in his maxims, one could not do anything without committing a sin; for he controls everything, this carping critic.

M. PER. And whatever he does control, is well controlled. He wishes to lead you on the road to heaven: and my son ought to make you all love him.

DAM. No, look here, grandmother, neither father nor anyone else shall ever induce me to look kindly upon him. I should belie my heart to say otherwise. His manners every moment enrage me; I can foresee the consequence, and one time or other I shall have to come to an open quarrel with this low-bred fellow.[6]

DOR. Certainly, it is a downright scandal to see a stranger exercise such authority in this house; to see a beggar, who, when he came, had not a shoe to his foot, and whose whole dress may have been worth twopence, so far forget himself as to cavil at everything, and to assume the authority of a master.

M. PER. Eh! mercy on me! things would go on much better if everything were managed according to his pious directions.

DOR. He passes for a saint in your opinion; but believe me, he is nothing but a hypocrite.

M. PER. What a tongue!

DOR. I should not like to trust myself with him, nor with his man Laurent, without a good guarantee.

M. PER. I do not know what the servant may be at heart; but as for the master, I will vouch for him as a good man. You bear him ill-will, and only reject him because he tells all of you the truth. It is against sin that his heart waxes wroth, and his only motive is the interest of Heaven.

DOR. Ay; but why, particularly for some time past, can he not bear anyone to come to the house? What is there offensive to Heaven in a civil visit, that there must be a noise about it fit to split one's ears? Between ourselves, do you wish me to explain? . . .

(*Pointing to Elmire.*) Upon my word, I believe him to be jealous of my mistress.

M. PER. Hold your tongue, and mind what you say. It is not he only who blames these visits. All the bustle of these people who frequent this house, these carriages everlastingly standing at the door, and the noisy crowd of so many servants, cause a great disturbance in the whole neighborhood. I am willing to believe that there is really no harm done; but people will talk of it, and that is not right.

CLE. Alas, madam, will you prevent people talking? It would be a very hard thing if, in life, for the sake of the foolish things which may be said about us, we had to renounce our best friends. And even if we could resolve to do so, do you think we could compel every one to hold his tongue? There is no protection against slander. Let us, therefore, pay no regard to all this silly tittle-tattle; let us endeavor to live honestly, and leave the gossips to say what they please.

DOR. May not Daphné, our neighbor, and her little husband, be those who speak ill of us? They whose own conduct is most ridiculous are always the first to slander others. They never fail to catch eagerly at the slightest rumor of a love-affair, to spread the news of it with joy, and to give it the turn which they want. They think to justify their own actions before the world by those of others, painted in colors of their choosing, either in the false expectation of glossing over their own intrigues with some semblance of innocence, or else by making to fall elsewhere some part of that public blame with which they are too heavily burdened.[7]

M. PER. All these arguments are nothing to the purpose. Orante is known to lead an exemplary life. All her cares tend to Heaven; and I have learned by people that she strongly condemns the company who visit here.

DOR. An admirable pattern indeed, and she is very good, this lady! It is true that she lives very austerely; but age has put this ardent zeal into her breast; people know that she is a prude against her own will. She enjoyed her advantages well enough as long as she was capable of attracting attentions; but, seeing the lustre of her eyes become somewhat dim, she renounces the world which is renouncing her, and conceals under the pompous cloak of lofty wisdom, the decay of her worn-out charms. These are the vicissitudes of coquettes in our time. They find it hard to see their admirers desert them. Thus forsaken, their gloomy anxiety sees no other resource but that of prudery; and the severity of these good women censures everything and pardons nothing.[8] Loudly they blame everyone's life, not through charity, but through envy, which cannot bear another to enjoy those pleasures for which their age gives them no longer a relish.[9]

M. PER. (*To Elmire.*) These are cock-and-bull stories, made to please you, daughter-in-law. One is obliged to keep silence here, for madam keeps the ball rolling all day. But I also will have my say in my turn. I tell you that my son has never done anything more sensible than in receiving this devout personage in his house; that Heaven itself, in time of need, has sent him here to reclaim all your erring minds; that for your salvation's sake, you ought to listen to him; and that he censures nothing but what is reprehensible. These visits, these balls, these conversations, are all inventions of the evil one. One never hears a pious word uttered at any of them; nothing but tittle-tattle, nonsense, and silly prattle. Very often our neighbor comes in for his share

of it, and there is backbiting going on right and left. In short, sensible people have their heads turned by the confusion of such meetings. A thousand idle stories are told in no time; and, as a certain doctor said very aptly the other day, it is a perfect tower of Babylon,[10] for everyone chatters to his heart's content; and to show you what brought this up . . . (*Pointing to Cléante.*) But here is this gentleman giggling already! Go and look for some fools to laugh at, and without . . . (*To Elmire.*) Good-bye, daughter-in-law: I will say no more. I make you a present of the rest, but it will be a fine day when I set my foot in your house again. (*Slapping Flipote's face.*) Come along, you; you stand dreaming and gaping here. Odds bobs! I shall warm your ears for you. March on, slut, march on.

SCENE II.—CLEANTE, DORINE.

CLE. I shall not go with her, for fear she should fall foul of me again; that this good lady . . .

DOR. Ah! it is a pity that she does not hear you say so; she would tell you that you are good, but that she is not yet old enough to be called so.

CLE. How she fired up against us for nothing! And how infatuated she seems with her Tartuffe!

DOR. Oh! indeed, all this is nothing compared with the son; and if you saw him, you would say it is much worse. During our troubles[11] he acted like a man of sense, and displayed some courage in the service of his prince;[12] but since he has grown so fond of this Tartuffe, he is become a perfect dolt. He calls him brother, and loves him in his very soul a hundred times better than either mother, son, daughter, or wife. He is the sole confidant of all his secrets, and the prudent director of all his actions; he caresses him, embraces him; and one could show no more affection, I think, to a mistress. He will have him seated at the upper end of the table, and is delighted to see him eat as much as half a dozen; the choicest morsels of everything must be given to him; and, if he happens to belch, he says to him, "God preserve you."[13] In short, he is crazy about him; he is his all, his hero; he admires everything he does, he quotes him on all occasions; he looks upon his most trifling actions as miracles, and every word he utters is considered an oracle. The other, who knows his dupe, and wishes to make the most of him, has the art of dazzling him by a hundred deceitful appearances. His pretended devotion draws money from him at every hour of the day, and assumes the right of commenting upon the conduct of every one of us. Even the jackanapes, his servant, pretends also to read us a lesson; he comes preaching to us with fierce looks, and throws away our ribbons, our paint, and our patches. Only the other day, the wretch tore a handkerchief which he had found between the leaves of *The Flower of the Saints*,[14] saying that it was a dreadful sin to bring these holy things into contact with the devil's deckings.

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, CLEANTE, DORINE.

ELM. (*To Cléante.*) You are very fortunate not to have assisted at the speech to which she treated us at the door. But I have just seen my husband; and as he did not see me, I shall go up stairs to await his coming.

CLE. I will wait for him here, with small pleasure; and merely say how do ye do to him.

SCENE IV.—CLEANTE, DAMIS, DORINE.

DAM. Just sound him about this marriage of my sister. I suspect that Tartuffe is opposed to it, because he makes my father use so many evasions; and you are not ignorant how greatly I am interested in it . . If the same passion fires my sister's and Valère's heart, the sister of this friend is, as you know, dear to me; and if it were necessary . . .

DOR. Here he is.

SCENE V.—ORGON, CLEANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ha! good-morrow, brother.

CLE. I was just going, and am glad to see you returned. The country is not very cheering at present.

ORG. Dorine . . . (*To Cléante.*) Pray, one moment, brother-in-law. Allow me to inquire the news here to ease my mind. (*To Dorine.*) Has everything gone on well these two days? What are they doing, and how are they all?

DOR. The day before yesterday my mistress had an attack of fever until evening, accompanied by an extraordinary headache.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. Tartuffe! He is wonderfully well, stout and fat, with a fresh complexion, and a ruddy mouth.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. In the evening she felt very sick, and could not touch a morsel of supper, so violent was still the pain in her head.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. He supped by himself in her presence; and very devoutly ate two partridges, and half a leg of mutton hashed.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. The whole night she did not close her eyes for a moment. She was so feverish that she could not sleep, and we were obliged to sit up with her until morning.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. Pleasantly overcome with sleep, he went to his room when he left the table; and jumped into his cosy bed, where he slept undisturbed until morning.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. We at length prevailed upon the mistress to be bled; and she was almost immediately relieved.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. He picked up his courage again, as he ought to; and, to fortify himself against all harm, he drank four large draughts of wine at breakfast, to make up for the blood that the mistress had lost.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. At present, they are both well; and I shall go and inform the mistress how glad you feel at her recovery.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, CLEANTE.

CLE. She is laughing at you to your face, brother: and, without wishing to make you angry, I must tell you candidly that it is not without reason. Was there ever such a whim heard of? Can it be possible that any man could so charm you nowadays as to make you forget everything for him? That after having relieved his indigence, in your own house, you should go as far as . . .

ORG. Stop, brother-in-law, you do not know the man of whom you are speaking.

CLE. I do not know him, if you like; but after all, in order to know what sort of man he is . . .

ORG. You would be charmed to know him, brother; and there would be no end to your delight. He is a man . . . who . . . ah . . . a man . . . in short, a man.[15] One who acts up to his own precepts, enjoys a profound peace, and looks upon the whole world as so much dirt. Yes; I am quite another man since I conversed with him; he teaches me to set my heart upon nothing; he detaches my mind from all friendship; and I could see brother, children, mother, and wife die, without troubling myself in the least about it.

CLE. Humane sentiments these, brother!

ORG. Ah! if you had seen how I first met him, you would have conceived the same friendship for him that I feel. Every day he came to church, and, with a gentle mien, kneeled down opposite me. He attracted the notice of the whole congregation by the fervency with which he sent up his prayers to Heaven. He uttered sighs, was enraptured, and humbly kissed the ground every moment; and when I went out, he swiftly ran before me to offer me holy water at the door. Informed by his servants, who imitate him in everything, of his poverty, and who he was, I made him some presents: but, with great modesty, he always wished to return some part of them. "It is too much," he said; "too much by half; I do not deserve your pity." And when I refused to take them back again, he would go and give them to the poor before my face. At length Heaven moved me to take him to my house, and since then, everything seems to prosper here. I perceive that he reproves everything, and that he takes a great interest, even in my wife, for my sake. He warns me of the people who look too lovingly at her, and he is six times more jealous of her than I am. But you cannot believe how far his zeal goes: the slightest trifle in himself he calls a sin; a mere nothing is sufficient to shock him; so much so that he accused himself, the other day, of having caught a flea whilst he was at his devotions, and of having killed it with too much anger.[16]

CLE. Zounds! I believe you are mad, brother. Are you making game of me with such a speech? and do you pretend that all this fooling . . .

ORG. Brother, this discourse savors of free-thinking.[17] You are somewhat tainted with it; and, as I have often told you, you will get yourself into some unpleasant scrape.

CLE. The usual clap-trap of your set; they wish everyone to be blind like themselves. To keep one's eyes open is to be a free-thinker; and whosoever does not worship pretentious affections has neither respect for nor faith in holy things. Go along; all your speeches do not frighten me; I know what I am saying, and Heaven sees my heart. We are not the slaves of your formalists. There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage; and as we never find the truly brave man make much noise where honor leads him, no more are the good and truly pious, whom we ought to follow, those who make so many grimaces. What! would you make no distinction between hypocrisy and true devotion? Would you treat them both alike, and give the same honor to the mask as to the face; put artifice on a level with sincerity, confound appearance with reality, value the shadow as much as the substance; and false coin the same as real? Men, for the most part, are strange creatures, and never keep the right mean; reason's boundaries are too narrow for them; in every character they overact their parts; and they often spoil the noblest designs, because they exaggerate, and carry them too far. This by the way, brother.

ORG. Yes, you are no doubt a doctor to be looked up to; you possess all the world's wisdom; you are the only sage, and the only enlightened man, an oracle, a Cato of the present age; and all men, compared with you, are fools.

CLE. I am not, brother, a doctor to be looked up to; nor do I possess all the world's wisdom. But, in one word, I know enough to distinguish truth from falsehood. And as I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or beautiful than the holy fervor of sincere piety, so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot, than those downright impostors, those devotees, for public show,[18] whose sacrilegious and deceitful grimaces abuse with impunity, and make a jest, according to their fancy, of what men hold most holy and sacred; those men who, from motives of self-interest, make a trade of piety, and would purchase honor and reputation at the cost of a hypocritical turning up of the eyes and pretended raptures; those men, I say, whom we see possessed with such an uncommon ardor for the next world, in order to make their fortunes in this; who, with great affectation and many prayers, daily recommend and preach solitude in the midst of the court; who know how to reconcile their zeal with their vices; who are passionate, vindictive, without belief, full of artifice, and would, in order to destroy a man, insolently cover their fierce resentment under the cloak of Heaven's interests. They are the more dangerous in their bitter wrath because they use against us weapons which men reverence, and because their passion, for which they are commended, prompts them to assassinate us with a consecrated blade. One sees too many of those vile characters, but the really devout at heart are easily recognized. Our age has shown us some, brother, who may serve us as glorious examples. Look at Ariston, look at Périandre, Oronte, Alcidamas, Polydore, Clitandre—no one disputes their title. But they do not boast of their virtue. One does not see this unbearable ostentation in them; and their piety is human, is tractable; they do not censure all our doings, they think that these corrections would show too much pride on their part; and, leaving big words to others, they reprove our actions by their own. They do not think anything evil, because it seems so, and their mind is inclined to judge well of others. They have no cabals, no intrigues; all their anxiety is to live well themselves. They never persecute a sinner; they hate sin only, and do not vindicate the interest of Heaven with greater zeal than Heaven itself. These are my people, that is the true way to act; that is, in short, an example to be followed. To say the truth, your man is not of that stamp; you vaunt his zeal with the best intention; but I believe that you are dazzled by a false glare.

ORG. My dear brother-in-law, have you had your say?

CLE. Yes.

ORG. (*Going.*) I am your humble servant.

CLE. Pray, one word more, brother. Let us drop this conversation. You know that Valère has your promise to be your son-in-law.

ORG. Yes.

CLE. And that you would appoint a day for the wedding.

ORG. True.

CLE. Why then defer the ceremony?

ORG. I do not know.

CLE. Have you another design in your mind?

ORG. Perhaps so.

CLE. Will you break your word?

ORG. I do not say that.

CLE. There is no obstacle, I think, to prevent you from fulfilling your promise?

ORG. That is as it may be.

CLE. Why so much ado about a single word? Valère sent me to you about it.

ORG. Heaven be praised for that!

CLE. But what answer shall I give him?

ORG. Whatever you please.

CLE. But it is necessary to know your intentions. What are they?

ORG. To do just what Heaven ordains.

CLE. But to the point. Valère has your promise: will you keep it or not?

ORG. Farewell.

CLE. (*Alone.*) I fear some misfortune for his love, and I ought to inform him of what is going on.[19]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ORGON, MARIANNE.

ORG. Marianne.

MAR. Father?

ORG. Come here; I have something to say to you privately.

MAR. (*To Orgon, who is looking into a closet.*) What are you looking for?

ORG. I am looking whether there is anyone there who might overhear us; for it is a most likely little place for such a purpose.[20] Now we are all right. Marianne, I have always found you of a sweet disposition, and you have always been very dear to me.

MAR. I am much obliged to you for this fatherly affection.

ORG. That is very [illegible] deserve it, [illegible] only care [illegible]

MAR. This is my greatest [illegible]

ORG. Very well. What [illegible] guest [illegible]?

MAR. Who? I?

ORG. Yes. Be careful [illegible]

MAR. Alas! I will say whatever [illegible]

SCENE II.—ORGON, MARIANNE, [illegible] (*entering softly and [illegible] without being [illegible]*)

ORG. That is [illegible] spoken. [illegible] me then, my child, that [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] I think, to pre-[illegible] your promise?

Orc. [illegible] it may be.

Cle. Why so much [illegible] about a [illegible]? Valere sent me to you about it.

Orc. Heaven be praised for that!

Cle. But what answer shall I give him?

Orc. Whatever you please.

Cle. But it is necessary [illegible] What are they?

Orc. To do just what Heaven ordains.

Cle. But to the point. Valere has your [illegible] will you keep it or not?

Orc. Farewell.

Cle. [illegible] I fear some misfortune for [illegible] to inform him of what [illegible]

ACT II.

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ORG. Marianne.

MAR. Father?

ORG. Come here; I have something to say to you privately.

MAR. (*To Orgon, who is looking into a closet.*) What are you looking for?

ORG. I am looking whether there is anyone there who might overhear us; for it is a most likely little place for such a purpose.[20] Now we are all right. Marianne, I have always found you of a sweet disposition, and you have always been very dear to me.

MAR. I am much obliged to you for this fatherly affection.

ORG. That is very well said, daughter; and to deserve it, your only care should be to please me.

MAR. This is my greatest ambition.

ORG. Very well. What say you of our guest Tartuffe?

MAR. Who? I?

ORG. You. Be careful how you answer.

MAR. Alas! I will say whatever you like of him.

SCENE II.—ORGON, MARIANNE, DORINE (*entering softly and keeping behind Orgon, without being seen*).

ORG. That is sensibly spoken . . . Tell me then, my child, that he is a man of the

highest worth; that he has touched your heart; and that it would be pleasant to you to see him, with my approbation, become your husband. Eh?

MAR. (*Drawing away with surprise.*) Eh?

ORG. What is the matter?

MAR. What did you say?

ORG. What?

MAR. Did I mistake?

ORG. How?

MAR. What would you have me say has touched my heart, father, and whom would it be pleasant to have for a husband, with your approbation?

ORG. Tartuffe.

MAR. But it is nothing of the kind, father, I assure you. Why would you have me tell such a falsehood?

ORG. But I wish it to be a truth; and it is sufficient for you that I have resolved it so.

MAR. What, father, would you . . .

ORG. Yes, daughter, I intend by your marriage to unite Tartuffe to my family. He shall be your husband; I have decided that; and as on your duty I . . . (*Perceiving Dorine.*) What are you doing here? Your anxious curiosity is very great, my dear, to induce you to listen to us in this manner.

DOR. In truth, I do not know whether this is a mere report, arising from conjecture or from chance; but they have just told me the news of this marriage, and I treated it as a pure hoax.

ORG. Why so? Is the thing incredible?

DOR. So much so, that even from you, sir, I do not believe it.

ORG. I know how to make you believe it, though.

DOR. Yes, yes, you are telling us a funny story.

ORG. I am telling you exactly what you will see shortly.

DOR. Nonsense!

ORG. What I say is not in jest, daughter.

DOR. Come, do not believe your father; he is joking.

ORG. I tell you . . .

DOR. No, you may say what you like; nobody will believe you.

ORG. My anger will at last . . .

DOR. Very well! we will believe you, then; and so much the worse for you. What! is it possible, sir, that, with that air of common sense, and this great beard in the very midst of your face, you would be foolish enough to be willing to . . .

ORG. Now listen: you have taken certain liberties in this house which I do not like; I tell you so, my dear.

DOR. Let us speak without getting angry, sir, I beg. Is it to laugh at people that you have planned this scheme? Your daughter is not suitable for a bigot: he has other things to think about. And, besides, what will such an alliance bring you? Why, with all your wealth, go and choose a beggar for your son-in-law . . . ?

ORG. Hold your tongue. If he has nothing, know that it is just for that that we ought to esteem him. His poverty is no doubt an honest poverty; it ought to raise him above all grandeur, because he has allowed himself to be deprived of his wealth by his little care for worldly affairs, and his strong attachment to things eternal. But my assistance may give him the means of getting out of his troubles, and of recovering his property. His estates are well known in this country; and, such as you see him, he is quite the nobleman.

DOR. Yes, so he says; and this vanity, sir, does not accord well with piety. Whosoever embraces the innocence of a holy life should not boast so much about his name and his

lineage; and the humble ways of piety do but ill agree with this outburst of ambition. What is the good of this pride . . . But this discourse offends you: let us speak of himself, and leave his nobility alone. Would you, without some compunction, give a girl like her to a man like him? And ought you not to have some regard for propriety, and foresee the consequences of such a union? Be sure that a girl's virtue is in danger when her choice is thwarted in her marriage; that her living virtuously depends upon the qualities of the husband whom they have chosen for her, and that those whose foreheads are pointed at everywhere often make of their wives what we see that they are. It is, in short, no easy task to be faithful to husbands cut out after a certain model; and he who gives to his daughter a man whom she hates, is responsible to Heaven for the faults she commits. Consider to what perils your design exposes you.

ORG. I tell you I must learn from her what to do!

DOR. You cannot do better than follow my advice.

ORG. Do not let us waste any more time with this silly prattle, daughter; I am your father, and know what is best for you. I had promised you to Valère; but besides his being inclined to gamble, as I am told, I also suspect him to be somewhat of a free-thinker; I never notice him coming to church.

DOR. Would you like him to run there at your stated hours, like those who go there only to be seen?

ORG. I am not asking your advice upon that. The other candidate for your hand is, in short, on the best of terms with Heaven, and that is a treasure second to none. This union will crown your wishes with every kind of blessings, it will be replete with sweetness and delight. You shall live together in faithful love, really like two children, like two turtle-doves; there will be no annoying disputes between you; and you will make anything you like of him.

DOR. She? she will never make anything but a fool[21] of him, I assure you.

ORG. Heyday! what language!

DOR. I say that he has the appearance of one, and that his destiny, sir, will be stronger than all your daughter's virtue.

ORG. Leave off interrupting me, and try to hold your tongue, without poking your nose into what does not concern you.

DOR. (*She continually interrupts him when he turns round to speak to his daughter.*) I speak only for your interest, sir.

ORG. You interest yourself too much; hold your tongue, if you please.

DOR. If one did not care for you . . .

ORG. I do not wish you to care for me.

DOR. And I will care for you, sir, in spite of yourself.

ORG. Ah!

DOR. Your honor is dear to me, and I cannot bear to see you the by-word of everyone.

ORG. You will not hold your tongue?

DOR. It is a matter of conscience to allow you to form such an alliance.

ORG. Will you hold your tongue, you serpent, whose brazen face . . .

DOR. What! you are religious, and fly in a rage!

ORG. Yes; all your nonsense has excited my choler, and once for all, you shall hold your tongue.

DOR. Be it so. But, though I do not say a word, I will think none the less.

ORG. Think, if you like; but take care not to say a word, or . . . (*Turning to his*

daughter.) That will do. As a sensible man, I have carefully weighed everything.

DOR. (*Aside.*) It drives me mad that I must not speak.

ORG. Without being a fop, Tartuffe's mien is such . . .

DOR. Yes, his is a very pretty phiz!

ORG. That even if you have no sympathy with his other gifts . . .

DOR. (*Aside.*) She has got a bargain! (*Orgon turns to Dorine, and, with crossed arms, listens and looks her in the face.*) If I were in her place, assuredly no man should marry me against my will with impunity: and I should show him, and that soon after the ceremony, that a woman has always a revenge at hand.

ORG. (*To Dorine.*) Then you do not heed what I say?

DOR. What are you grumbling at? I did not speak to you.

ORG. What did you do then?

DOR. I was speaking to myself.

ORG. (*Aside.*) Very well! I must give her a backhander to pay her out for her extreme insolence. (*He puts himself into a position to slap Dorine's face; and, at every word which he says to his daughter, he turns round to look at Dorine, who stands bolt upright without speaking.*) You ought to approve of my plan, daughter . . . and believe that the husband whom I have selected for you . . . (*To Dorine.*) Why do you not speak to yourself?

DOR. I have nothing to say to myself.

ORG. Just another little word.

DOR. It does not suit me.

ORG. I was looking out for you, be sure.

DOR. I am not such a fool as you think me!

ORG. In short, daughter, you must obey, and show a complete deference to my choice.

DOR. (*Running away.*) I would not care a straw for such a husband.

ORG. (*Failing to slap Dorine's face.*) You have a pestilent hussy with you, daughter, with whom I cannot put up any longer without forgetting myself. I do not feel equal to continue our conversation now; her insolent remarks have set my brain on fire, and I must have a breath of air to compose myself.

SCENE III.—MARIANNE, DORINE.

DOR. Tell me, have you lost your speech? And I must act your part in this affair? To allow such a senseless proposal to be made to you, without saying the least word against it!

MAR. What would you have me do against a tyrannical father?

DOR. That which is necessary to ward off such a threat.

MAR. What?

DOR. Tell him that you cannot love by proxy, that you marry for yourself, and not for him; that you being the only one concerned in this matter, it is you, and not he, who must like the husband, and that since Tartuffe is so charming in his eyes, he may marry himself without let or hindrance.

MAR. Ah! a father, I confess, has so much authority over us, that I have never had the courage to answer him.

DOR. But let us argue this affair. Valère has proposed for you: do you love him, pray, or do you not?

MAR. Ah! you do my feelings great injustice, Dorine, to ask me such a question. Have I not a hundred times opened my heart to you? and do not you know the warmth of my affection for him?

DOR. How do I know whether your lips have spoken what your heart felt? and whether you have any real regard for this lover?

MAR. You wrong me greatly in doubting it, Dorine; for my true sentiments have been but too clearly shown.

DOR. You really love him, then?

MAR. Yes, very passionately.

DOR. And, to all appearance, he loves you as well?

MAR. I believe so.

DOR. And you are both equally eager to marry each other?

MAR. Assuredly.

DOR. What do you expect from this other match, then?

MAR. To kill myself, if they force me to it.

DOR. Very well. That is a resource I did not think of; you have only to die to get out of trouble. The remedy is doubtless admirable. It drives me mad to hear this sort of talk.

MAR. Good gracious! Dorine, what a temper you get into! You do not sympathize in the least with people's troubles.

DOR. I do not sympathize with people who talk stupidly, and, when an opportunity presents itself, give way as you do!

MAR. But what would you have me do? If I am timid . . .

DOR. Love requires firmness.

MAR. But have I wavered in my affection toward Valère? and is it not his duty to obtain a father's consent?

DOR. But what! if your father is a downright churl, who is completely taken up with Tartuffe, and will break off a match he had agreed on, is your lover to be blamed for that?

MAR. But am I, by a flat refusal and a scornful disdain, to let everyone know how much I am smitten? However brilliant Valère may be, am I to forget the modesty of my sex, and my filial duty? And would you have me display my passion to the whole world . . .

DOR. No, I would have you do nothing of the sort. I perceive that you would like to be Mr. Tartuffe's; and I should be wrong, now that I come to think of it, to turn you from such a union. What right have I to oppose your wishes? The match in itself is very advantageous. Monsieur Tartuffe! oh, oh! is no small fry. Certainly Monsieur Tartuffe, all things considered, is no fool;[22] no, not at all, and it is no small honor to be his better half. Already everyone crowns him with glory. He is a noble in his own country, handsome in appearance; he has red ears and a florid complexion. You will live only too happily with such a husband.

MAR. Good gracious! . . .

DOR. How joyful you will be to see yourself the wife of such a handsome husband!

MAR. Ah! leave off such talk, I pray, and rather assist me to free myself from this match. It is finished: I yield, and am ready to do anything.

DOR. No; a daughter ought to obey her father, even if he wishes her to marry an ape. Yours is an enviable fate: of what do you complain? You will drive down in the stage-coach to his native town, where you will find plenty of uncles and cousins, whom it will be your great delight to entertain. You will be introduced directly into the best society. You will go and pay the first visits to the wife of the bailie,[23] and of the assessor,[24] who will do you the honor of giving you a folding-chair. There, at carnival time, you may expect a ball, with the grand band[26] of musicians, to wit, two bagpipes, and sometimes

Fagotin[7] and the marionnettes. If your husband, however . . .

MAR. Oh! you kill me. Try rather to assist me with your counsels.

DOR. I am your servant.

MAR. Ah! for pity's sake, Dorine . . .

DOR. This affair ought to go on, to punish you.

MAR. There is a good girl!

DOR. No.

MAR. If I declare to you that . . .

DOR. Not at all. Tartuffe is your man, and you shall have a taste of him.

MAR. You know that I have always confided in you: do . . .

DOR. No, it is of no use, you shall be Tartuffed.

MAR. Very well, since my misfortunes cannot move you, leave me henceforth entirely to my despair. My heart shall seek help from that; and I know an infallible remedy for my sufferings. (*She wishes to go.*)

DOR. Stop, stop, come back. I give in. In spite of all, I must take compassion on you.

MAR. Look here, Dorine, if they inflict this cruel martyrdom upon me, I shall die of it. I tell you.

DOR. Do not worry yourself. We will cleverly prevent . . . But here comes Valère, your lover.

SCENE IV.—VALERE, MARIANNE. DORINE.

VAL. I have just been told a piece of news, madam, which I did not know, and which is certainly very pretty.

MAR. What is it?

VAL. That you are going to be married to Tartuffe.

MAR. My father has taken this idea into his head, certainly.

VAL. Your father, madam . . .

MAR. Has altered his mind: he has just proposed this affair to me.

VAL. What! seriously?

MAR. Yes, seriously, he has openly declared himself for this match.

VAL. And what have you decided, in your own mind, madam?

MAR. I know not.

VAL. The answer is polite. You know not?

MAR. No.

VAL. No?

MAR. What do you advise me?

VAL. I? I advise you to take this husband.

MAR. Is that your advice?

VAL. Yes.

MAR. Seriously?

VAL. Doubtless. The choice is glorious, and well worth consideration.

MAR. Very well, sir, I shall act upon the advice.

VAL. That will not be very painful, I think.

MAR. Not more painful than for you to give it.

VAL. I gave it to please you, madam.

MAR. And I shall follow it to please you.

DOR. (*Retiring to the farther part of the stage.*) Let us see what this will come to.

VAL. This, then, is your affection? And it was all deceit when you . . .

MAR. Do not let us speak of that, I pray. You have told me quite candidly that I ought to accept the husband selected for me; and I declare that I intend to do so, since you give me this wholesome advice.

VAL. Do not make my advice your excuse. Your resolution was taken beforehand; and you catch at a frivolous pretext to justify the breaking of your word.

MAR. Very true, and well put.

VAL. No doubt; and you never had any real affection for me.

MAR. Alas! think so, if you like.

VAL. Yes, yes, if I like; but my offended feelings may perhaps forestall you in such a design; and I know where to offer both my heart and my hand.

MAR. Ah! I have no doubt of it; and the love which merit can command . . .

VAL. For Heaven's sake, let us drop merit. I have but little, no doubt; and you have given proof of it. But I hope much from the kindness of some one whose heart is open to me, and who will not be ashamed to consent to repair my loss.

MAR. The loss is not great; and you will easily enough console yourself for this change.

VAL. I shall do my utmost, you may depend. A heart that forgets us wounds our self-love; we must do our best to forget it also; if we do not succeed, we must at least pretend to do so: for the meanness is unpardonable of still loving when we are forsaken.

MAR. This is, no doubt, an elevated and noble sentiment.

VAL. It is so; and everyone must approve of it. What! would you have me forever to nourish my ardent affection for you, and not elsewhere bestow that heart which you reject, whilst I see you, before my face, pass into the arms of another?

MAR. On the contrary; as for me, that is what I would have you do, and I wish it were done already.

VAL. You wish it?

MAR. Yes.

VAL. That is a sufficient insult, madam; and I shall satisfy you this very moment. (*He pretends to go.*)

MAR. Very well.

VAL. (*Coming back.*) Remember, at least, that you yourself drive me to this extremity.

MAR. Yes.

VAL. (*Coming back once more.*) And that I am only following your example.

MAR. Very well, my example.

VAL. (*Going.*) That will do: you shall be obeyed on the spot.

MAR. So much the better.

VAL. (*Coming back again.*) This is the last time that you will ever see me.

MAR. That is right.

VAL. (*Goes, and turns back at the door.*) Eh?

MAR. What is the matter?

VAL. Did not you call me?

MAR. I! You are dreaming.

VAL. Well! then I will be gone. Farewell, madam. (*He goes slowly.*)

MAR. Farewell, sir.

DOR. (*To Marianne.*) I think that you are losing your senses with all this folly. I have all along allowed you to quarrel, to see what it would lead to at last. Hullo, Mr. Valère. (*She takes hold of Valère's arm.*)

VAL. (*Pretending to resist.*) Eh? what do you want. Dorine?

DOR. Come here.

VAL. No, no, I feel too indignant. Do not hinder me from doing as she wishes me.

DOR. Stop.

VAL. No; look here, I have made up my mind.

DOR. Ah!

MAR. (*Aside.*) He cannot bear to see me, my presence drives him away; and I had therefore much better leave the place.

DOR. (*Quitting Valère and running after Marianne.*) Now for the other! Where are you running to?

MAR. Let me alone.

DOR. You must come back.

MAR. No, no, Dorine; it is of no use detaining me.

VAL. (*Aside.*) I see, but too well, that the sight of me annoys her; and I had, no doubt, better free her from it.

DOR. (*Leaving Marianne and running after Valère.*) What, again! The devil take you! Yes. I will have it so. Cease this fooling, and come here both of you. (*She holds them both.*)

VAL. (*To Dorine.*) But what are you about?

MAR. (*To Dorine.*) What would you do?

DOR. I would have you make it up together, and get out of this scrape. (*To Valère.*) Are you mad to wrangle in this way?

VAL. Did you not hear how she spoke to me?

DOR. (*To Marianne.*) Are you silly to have got into such a passion?

MAR. Did you not see the thing, and how he has treated me?

DOR. Folly on both sides. (*To Valère.*) She has no other wish than to remain yours, I can vouch for it. (*To Marianne.*) He loves none but you, and desires nothing more than to be your husband. I will answer for it with my life.

MAR. (*To Valère.*) Why then did you give me such advice?

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Why did you ask me for it on such a subject?

DOR. You are a pair of fools. Come, your hands, both of you. (*To Valère.*) Come, yours.

VAL. (*Giving his hand to Dorine.*) What is the good of my hand?

DOR. (*To Marianne.*) Come, now, yours.

MAR. (*Giving hers.*) What is the use of all this?

DOR. Good heavens! quick, come on. You love each other better than you think. (*Valère and Marianne hold each other's hands for some time without speaking.*)

VAL. (*Turning toward Marianne.*) Do not do things with such a bad grace, and cast a glance upon one without any hatred. (*Marianne turns to Valère, and smiles on him.*)

DOR. Truth to tell, lovers are great fools!

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Now really! have I no reason to complain of you? and, without an untruth, are you not a naughty girl to delight in saying disagreeable things?

MAR. And you, are you not the most ungrateful fellow . . .

DOR. Leave all this debate till another time, and let us think about averting this confounded marriage.

MAR. Tell us, then, what we are to do.

DOR. We must do many things. (*To Marianne.*) Your father does but jest. (*To Valère.*) And it is all talk. (*To Marianne.*) But as for you, you had better appear to comply quietly with his nonsense, so that, in case of need, it may be easier for you to put off this proposed marriage. In gaining time we gain everything. Sometimes you can pretend a sudden illness, that will necessitate a delay; then you can pretend some evil omens, that you unluckily met a corpse, broke a looking-glass, or dreamed of muddy water. In short, the best of it is that they cannot unite you to anyone else but him, unless you please to say yes. But, the better to succeed, I think it advisable that you should not be seen talking together. (*To Valère.*) Now go; and without delay, employ your friends to make Orgon keep his promise to you. We will interest her brother, and enlist her mother-in-law on our side. Good-bye.

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Whatever efforts we may make together, my greatest hope, to tell the truth, is in you.

MAR. (*To Valère.*) I cannot answer for the will of a father; but I shall be no one but Valère's.

VAL. Oh, how happy you make me! and, whatever they may attempt . . .

DOR. Ah! lovers are never weary of prattling. Be off, I tell you.

VAL. (*Goes a step, and returns.*) After all . . .

DOR. What a cackle! Go you this way; and you, the other. (*Dorine pushes each of them by the shoulder, and compels them to separate.*)

MAR. Let me alone.

DOR. You must come back.

MAR. No, no, Dorine; it is of no use detaining me.

VAL. (*Aside.*) I see, but too well, that the sight of me annoys her; and I had, no doubt, better free her from it.

DOR. (*Leaving Marianne and running after Valère.*) What, again! The devil take you! Yes. I will have it so. Cease this fooling, and come here both of you. (*She holds them back.*)

VAL. (*To Dorine.*) But what are you about?

DOR. (*To Valère.*) What would you do?

[illegible]

VAL. Did you not bid me [illegible]

DOR. (*To Marianne.*) [illegible]

[illegible]

DOR. Fudge on both sides. (*To Valère.*) [illegible] (*To Marianne.*) He loves more than you, and there's nothing more [illegible] to be your husband. I will answer for it with my life.

MAR. (*To Valère.*) Why then did you give me such advice?

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Why did you ask me for it on such a subject?

DOR. You are a pair of [illegible]. Come, your hands, both of you. (*To Valère.*) Come, you.

VAL. (*Giving his hand to Dorine.*) What is this good of my hand?

DOR. (*To Marianne.*) Come, [illegible]

MAR. (*Giving hand.*) What is the use of all this?

DOR. Good heavens! quick, come on. You love each other better than you think. (*Valère and Marianne hold each other's hands for some time without speaking.*)

VAL. (*Turning toward Marianne.*) Do not do things with such a bad grace, and cast a glance upon one without any hatred. (*Marianne turns to Valère, and smiles on him.*)

DOR. Truth to tell, lovers are great fools!

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Now really! have I [illegible]

MAR. And you, [illegible] the most [illegible] fellow . . .

DOR. Leave all this debate till another time, and think about averting this [illegible] marriage.

[illegible]

[illegible] (*To Marianne.*) [illegible] (*To Valère.*) [illegible] (*To Marianne.*) [illegible] (*To Valère.*) [illegible] appear to [illegible] case of need, it may be easier for you to put off this proposed marriage. In gaining time we gain everything. Sometimes you can pretend a sudden illness, that will necessitate a delay; then you can pretend some evil omens, that you unluckily met a corpse, broke a looking-glass, or dreamed of muddy water. In short, the fear of it [illegible] drive you to adjure [illegible] you [illegible] success. I think [illegible] you [illegible] be [illegible] (*To Marianne.*) Now [illegible] may employ your friends [illegible] promise to you. We [illegible] her [illegible], and entreat her [illegible] side. Good-bye.

VAL. (*To Marianne.*) Whatever efforts we may make together, my greatest hope, to tell the truth, is in you.

MAR. (*To Valère.*) I cannot answer for the will of a father; but I shall be no one but Valère's.

VAL. Oh, how happy you make me! and, whatever they may attempt . . .

DOR. Ah! lovers are never weary of prattling. Be off, I tell you.

VAL. (*Goes a step, and returns.*) After all . . .

DOR. What a cackle! Go you this way; and you, the other. (*Dorine pushes each of them by the shoulder, and compels them to separate.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Damis, Dorine.

Dam. May lightning strike me dead on the spot, may everyone treat me as the greatest of scoundrels, if any respect or authority shall stop me from doing something rash!

Dor. Curb this temper for Heaven's sake: your father did but mention it. People do not carry out all their proposals; and the road between the saying and the doing is a long one.

Dam. I must put a stop to this fellow's plots, and whisper a word or two in his ear.

Dor. Gently, pray! leave him, and your father as well, to your mother-in-law's management. She has some influence with Tartuffe: he agrees to all that she says, and I should not wonder if he had some sneaking regard for her. Would to Heaven that it were true. A pretty thing that would be.[25] In short, your interest obliges her to send for him: she wishes to sound him about this marriage that troubles you, to know his intentions, and to acquaint him with the sad contentions which he may cause, if he entertains any hope on this subject. His servant told me he was at prayers, and that I could not get sight of him; but said that he was coming down. Go, therefore, I pray you, and let me wait for him.

Dam. I may be present at this interview?

Dor. Not at all. They must be alone.

DAM. I shall not say a word to him.

DOR. You deceive yourself: we know your usual outburst; and that is just the way to spoil all. Go.

DAM. No; I will see, without getting angry.

DOR. How tiresome you are! Here he comes. Go away. (*Damis hides himself in a closet at the farther end of the stage.*)

SCENE II.—TARTUFFE, DORINE.

TAR. (*The moment he perceives Dorine he begins to speak loudly to his servant, who is behind.*)[29] Laurent, put away my hair-shirt and my scourge, and pray that Heaven may ever enlighten you. If anyone calls to see me, say that I have gone to the prisoners to distribute the alms which I have received.

DOR. (*Aside.*) What affectation and boasting!

TAR. What do you want?

DOR. To tell you . . .

TAR. (*Pulling a handkerchief from his pocket.*) For Heaven's sake! before you go any farther, take this handkerchief, I pray.

DOR. For what?

TAR. Cover this bosom, which I cannot bear to see. The spirit is offended by such sights, and they evoke sinful thoughts.

DOR. You are, then, mighty susceptible to temptation; and the flesh seems to make a great impression on your senses! I cannot tell, of course, what heat inflames you, but my desires are not so easily aroused; and I could see you naked from top to toe, without being in the least tempted by the whole of your skin.

TAR. Be a little more modest in your expressions, or I shall leave you on the spot.

DOR. No, no, it is I who am going to leave you to yourself; and I have only two words to say to you. My mistress is coming down into this parlor, and wishes the favor of a minute's conversation with you.

TAR. Alas! with all my heart.

DOR. (*Aside.*) How he softens down! Upon my word, I stick to what I have said of him.

TAR. Will she be long?

DOR. Methinks I hear her. Yes, it is herself, and I leave you together.

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, TARTUFFE.

TAR. May Heaven, in its mighty goodness, forever bestow upon you health, both of soul and body, and bless your days as much as the humblest of its votaries desires.

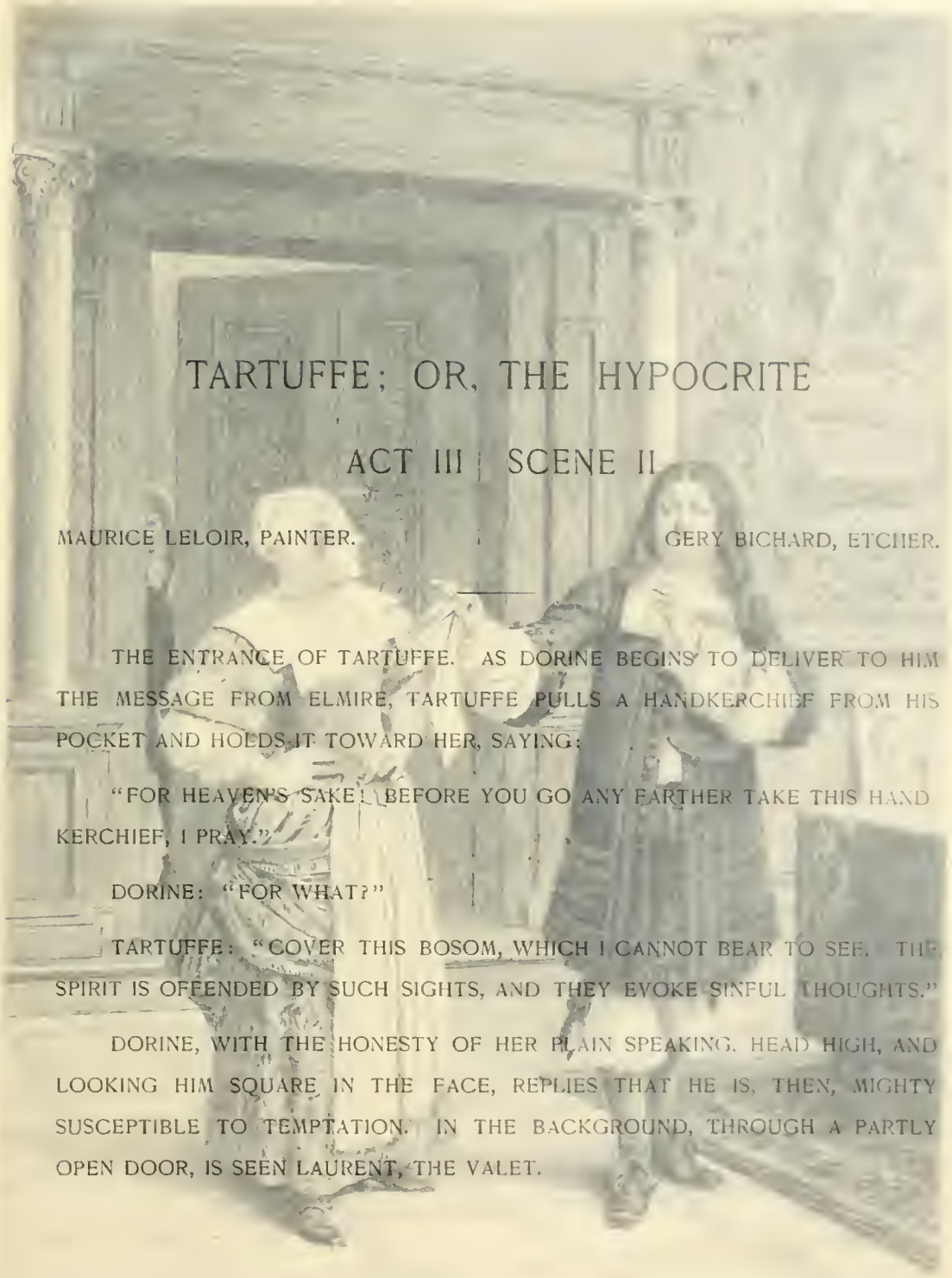
ELM. I am much obliged for this pious wish. But let us take a seat, to be more at ease.

TAR. (*Seated.*) Are you quite recovered from your indisposition?

ELM. (*Seated.*) Quite; this fever has soon left me.

TAR. My prayers are not deserving enough to have drawn this grace from above; but not one of them ascended to heaven that had not your recovery for its object.

ELM. You are too anxious in your zeal for me.



TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE

ACT III | SCENE II

MAURICE LELOIR, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

THE ENTRANCE OF TARTUFFE. AS DORINE BEGINS TO DELIVER TO HIM THE MESSAGE FROM ELMIRE, TARTUFFE PULLS A HANDKERCHIEF FROM HIS POCKET AND HOLDS IT TOWARD HER, SAYING:

"FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! BEFORE YOU GO ANY FARTHER TAKE THIS HANDKERCHIEF, I PRAY."

DORINE: "FOR WHAT?"

TARTUFFE: "COVER THIS BOSOM, WHICH I CANNOT BEAR TO SEE. THE SPIRIT IS OFFENDED BY SUCH SIGHTS, AND THEY EVOKE SINFUL THOUGHTS."

DORINE, WITH THE HONESTY OF HER PLAIN SPEAKING, HEAD HIGH, AND LOOKING HIM SQUARE IN THE FACE, REPLIES THAT HE IS, THEN, MIGHTY SUSCEPTIBLE TO TEMPTATION. IN THE BACKGROUND, THROUGH A PARTLY OPEN DOOR, IS SEEN LAURENT, THE VALET.

being in the least tempted by the whole of your skin.

TAR. Be a little more modest in your expressions, or I shall leave you on the spot.

ORG. No, no, it is I who am going to leave you to yourself, and I have only two words to say to you. My mistress is coming down into this parlor, and wishes the favor of a minute's conversation with you.

TAR. Most willingly, my heart.

ORG. She comes down. Upon my word, I look to what I have said of him. How long can he be long?

LOR. Methinks I hear her. Yes, it is herself, and I leave you together.

MAURICE LELOIR, PAINTER.

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE

ACT III. SCENE II

GERY RICHARD, ETCHER.

SCENE II.—The same. Orgon.

TAR. (*The moment he perceives Orgon he drops a deep contrite sigh, and assumes a most devotional air. If anyone could see the inward workings of this man, he would be frightened at the sight. Aside, to his valet, who has just left him:*) Laurent, my hair shirt, my discipline, and my iron girdle, that I may go and offer up my prayers for the prosperity of our pious brother.

ORG. Good morrow, Tartuffe.

TAR. (*With unctuous humility and a low bow.*) What do you want?

ORG. To tell you . . .

TAR. (*Aside.*) My heart is overjoyed at seeing him.

ORG. . . . I am . . .

TAR. (*Aside.*) I am in a fever of joy

TAR. We cannot cherish your dear health too much; and to re-establish yours, I would have given mine.

ELM. That is pushing Christian charity very far; and I feel much indebted to you for all this kindness.

TAR. I do much less for you than you deserve.

ELM. I wished to speak to you in private about a certain matter, and am glad that no one is here to observe us.

TAR. I am equally delighted; and no doubt, it is very pleasant to me, madam, to find myself alone with you. I have often asked this opportunity from Heaven, but, till now, in vain.

ELM. What I wish is a few words with you, upon a small matter, in which you bare your heart and conceal nothing from me. (*Damis, without showing himself, half opens the door of the closet into which he had retired to listen to the conversation.*)

TAR. And I will also, in return for this rare favor, unbosom myself entirely to you, and swear to you that the reports which I have spread about the visits which you receive in homage of your charms, do not spring from any hatred toward you, but rather from a passionate zeal which carries me away, and out of a pure motive . . .

ELM. That is how I take it. I think it is for my good that you trouble yourself so much.

TAR. (*Taking Elmire's hand and pressing her fingers.*) Yes, madam, no doubt; and my fervor is such . . .

ELM. Oh! you squeeze me too hard.

TAR. It is through excess of zeal. I never had any intention of hurting you, and would sooner . . . (*He places his hand on Elmire's knee.*)

ELM. What does your hand there?

TAR. I am only feeling your dress; the stuff is very soft.

ELM. Oh! please leave off, I am very ticklish. (*Elmire pushes her chair back, and Tartuffe draws near with his.*)

TAR. (*Handling the collar of Elmire.*) Bless me! how wonderful is the workmanship of this lace! They work in a miraculous manner nowadays; never was anything so beautifully made.[30]

ELM. It is true. But let us have some talk about our affair. I have been told that my husband wishes to retract his promise, and give you his daughter. Is it true? Tell me.

TAR. He has hinted something to me; but to tell you the truth, madam, that is not the happiness for which I am sighing: I behold elsewhere the marvelous attractions of that bliss which forms the height of my wishes.

ELM. That is because you have no love for earthly things.

TAR. My breast does not contain a heart of flint.

ELM. I believe that all your sighs tend toward Heaven, and that nothing here below rouses your desires.

TAR. The love which attaches us to eternal beauties does not stifle in us the love of earthly things; our senses may easily be charmed by the perfect works which Heaven has created. Its reflected loveliness shines forth in such as you; but in you alone it displays its choicest wonders. It has diffused on your face such beauty, that it dazzles the eyes and transports the heart; nor could I behold you, perfect creature, without admiring in you nature's author, and feeling my heart smitten with an ardent love for the most beautiful of portraits, wherein he has reproduced himself. At first I feared that this secret ardor might be nothing

but a cunning snare of the foul fiend; and my heart even resolved to fly your presence, thinking that you might be an obstacle to my salvation. But at last I found, oh! most lovely beauty, that my passion could not be blamable; that I could reconcile it with modesty; and this made me freely indulge it. It is, I confess, a great presumption in me to dare to offer you this heart; but I expect, in my affections, everything from your kindness, and nothing from the vain efforts of my own weakness. In you is my hope, my happiness, my peace: on you depends my torment or my bliss: and it is by your decision solely that I shall be happy if you wish it, or miserable, if it pleases you.

ELM. The declaration is exceedingly gallant; but it is, to speak truly, rather a little surprising. Methinks you ought to arm your heart better, and to reflect a little upon such a design. A pious man like you, and who is everywhere spoken of . . .

TAR. Ah! although I am a pious man, I am not the less a man:[31] and, when one beholds your heavenly charms, the heart surrenders and reasons no longer. I know that such discourse from me must appear strange; but, after all, madam, I am not an angel; and if my confession be condemned by you, you must blame your own attractions for it. As soon as I beheld their more than human loveliness, you became the queen of my soul. The ineffable sweetness of your divine glances broke down the resistance of my obstinate heart: it overcame everything — fastings, prayers, tears—and led all my desires to your charms. My looks and my sighs have told you so a thousand times; and, the better to explain myself, I now make use of words. If you should graciously contemplate the tribulations of your unworthy slave; if your kindness would console me, and will condescend to stoop to my insignificant self, I shall ever entertain for you, oh! miracle of sweetness! an unexampled devotion. Your honor runs not the slightest risk with me, and need not fear the least disgrace on my part. All these court gallants, of whom women are so fond, are noisy in their doings, and vain in their talk; they are incessantly pluming themselves on their successes, and they receive no favors which they do not divulge. Their indiscreet tongues, in which people confide, desecrate the altar on which their hearts sacrifice. But men of our stamp love discreetly, and with them a secret is always surely kept. The care which we take of our own reputation is a sufficient guarantee for the object of our love; and it is only with us, when they accept our hearts, that they find love without scandal, and pleasure without fear.[32]

ELM. I have listened to what you say, and your rhetoric explains itself in sufficiently strong terms to me. But are you not afraid that the fancy may take me to tell my husband of this gallant ardor, and that the prompt knowledge of such an amour might well change the friendship which he bears you.

TAR. I know that you are too gracious, and that you will pardon my boldness; that you will excuse, on the score of human frailty, the violent transports of a passion which offends you, and consider, by looking at yourself, that people are not blind, and men are made of flesh and blood.

ELM. Others would perhaps take it in a different fashion; but I shall show my discretion. I shall not tell the matter to my husband: but in return, I require something of you: that is, to forward, honestly and without

quibbling, the union of Valère with Marianne, to renounce the unjust power which would enrich you with what belongs to another; and . . .

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DAM. (*Coming out of the closet in which he was hidden.*) No, madam, no; this shall be made public. I was in there when I overheard it all; and Providence seems to have conducted me thither to abash the pride of a wretch who wrongs me; to point me out a way to take vengeance on his hypocrisy and insolence; to undeceive my father and to show him plainly the heart of a villain who talks to you of love.

ELM. No, Damis; it suffices that he reforms, and endeavors to deserve my indulgence. Since I have promised him, do not make me break my word. I have no wish to provoke a scandal; a woman laughs at such follies, and never troubles her husband's ears with them.

DAM. You have your reasons for acting in that way, and I also have mine for behaving differently. It is a farce to wish to spare him; and the insolent pride of his bigotry has already triumphed too much over my just anger, and caused too much disorder amongst us. The scoundrel has governed my father too long, and plotted against my affections as well as Valère's. My father must be undeceived about this perfidious wretch; and Heaven offers me an easy means. I am indebted to it for this opportunity, and it is too favorable to be neglected. I should deserve to have it snatched away from me, did I not make use of it, now that I have it in hand.

ELM. Damis . . .

DAM. No; by your leave, I will use my own judgment. I am highly delighted; and all you can say will be in vain to make me forego the pleasure of revenge. I shall settle this affair without delay; and here is just the opportunity.

SCENE V.—ORGON, ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DAM. We will enliven your arrival, father, with an altogether fresh incident, that will surprise you much. You are well repaid for all your caresses, and this gentleman rewards your tenderness handsomely. His great zeal for you has just shown itself; he aims at nothing less than dishonoring you; and I have just surprised him making to your wife an insulting avowal of a guilty passion. Her sweet disposition, and her too discreet feelings would by all means have kept the secret from you; but I cannot encourage such insolence, and think that to have been silent about it would have been to do you an injury.

ELM. Yes, I am of opinion that we ought never to trouble a husband's peace with all those silly stories; that our honor does not depend upon that; and that it is enough for us to be able to defend ourselves. These are

my sentiments; and you would have said nothing, Damis, if I had had any influence with you.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

ORG. What have I heard? Oh heavens! is it credible?

TAR. Yes, brother, I am a wicked, guilty, wretched sinner, full of iniquity, the greatest villain that ever existed. Each moment of my life is replete with pollutions; it is but a mass of crime and corruption; and I see that Heaven, to chastise me, intends to mortify me on this occasion. Whatever great crime may be laid to my charge, I have neither the wish nor the pride to deny it. Believe what you are told, arm your anger, and drive me like a criminal from your house. Whatever shame you may heap upon me, I deserve still more.

ORG. (*To his son.*) What, wretch! dare you, by this falsehood, tarnish the purity of his virtue?

DAM. What, shall the pretended gentleness of this hypocrite make you belie . . .

ORG. Peace, cursed plague!

TAR. Ah! let him speak; you accuse him wrongly, and you had much better believe in his story. Why will you be so favorable to me after hearing such a fact? Are you, after all, aware of what I am capable? Why trust to my exterior, brother, and why, for all that is seen, believe me to be better than I am? No, no, you allow yourself to be deceived by appearances, and I am, alas! nothing less than what they think me. Everyone takes me to be a godly man, but the real truth is that I am very worthless. (*Addressing himself to Damis.*) Yes, my dear child, say on; call me a perfidious, infamous, lost wretch, a thief, a murderer; load me with still more detestable names; I shall not contradict you, I have deserved them; and I am willing on my knees to suffer ignominy, as a disgrace due to the crimes of my life.[33]

ORG. (*To Tartuffe.*) This is too much, brother. (*To his son.*) Does not your heart relent, wretch?

DAM. What! shall his words deceive you so far as to . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue, you hangdog. (*Raising Tartuffe.*) Rise, brother, I beseech you. (*To his son.*) Infamous wretch!

DAM. He can . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue.

DAM. I burst with rage. What! I am looked upon as . . .

ORG. Say another word, and I will break your bones.

TAR. In Heaven's name, brother, do not forget yourself! I would rather suffer the greatest hardship, than that he should receive the slightest hurt for my sake.

ORG. (*To his son.*) Ungrateful monster!

TAR. Leave him in peace. If I must on both knees, ask you to pardon him . . .

ORG. (*Throwing himself on his knees also, and embracing Tartuffe.*) Alas! are you in jest? (*To his son.*) Behold his goodness, scoundrel!

DAM. Thus . . .

ORG. Cease.

DAM. What! I . . .

ORG. Peace, I tell you: I know too well the motive of your attack. You all hate him, and I now perceive wife, children, and servants all let loose against him. Every trick

is impudently resorted to to remove this pious person from my house; but the more efforts they put forth to banish him, the more shall I employ to keep him here, and I shall hasten to give him my daughter, to abash the pride of my whole family.

DAM. Do you mean to compel her to accept him?

ORG. Yes, wretch! and to enrage you, this very evening. Yes; I defy you all, and shall let you know that I am the master, and that I will be obeyed. Come, retract; throw yourself at his feet immediately, you scoundrel, and ask his pardon.

DAM. What! I at the feet of this rascal who, by his impostures . . .

ORG. What, you resist, you beggar, and insult him besides! (*To Tartuffe.*) A cudgel! a cudgel! do not hold me back.[34] (*To his son.*) Out of my house, this minute, and never dare to come back to it.

DAM. Yes, I shall go; but . . .

ORG. Quick, leave the place, I disinherit you, you hangdog, and give you my curse besides!

SCENE VII.—ORGON, TARTUFFE.

ORG. To offend a saintly person in that way!

TAR. Forgive him, oh Heaven! the pang he causes me.[35] (*To Orgon.*) Could you but know my grief at seeing myself blackened in my brother's sight . . .

ORG. Alas!

TAR. The very thought of this ingratitude tortures my soul to that extent . . . The horror I conceive of it . . . My heart is so oppressed that I cannot speak, and I believe it will be my death.

ORG. (*Running, all in tears, toward the door, by which his son has disappeared.*) Scoundrel! I am sorry my hand has spared you, and not knocked you down on the spot. (*To Tartuffe.*) Compose yourself, brother, and do not grieve.

TAR. Let us put an end to these sad disputes. I perceive what troubles I cause in this house, and think it necessary, brother, to leave it.

ORG. What! you are jesting surely?

TAR. They hate me, and I find that they are trying to make you suspect my integrity.

ORG. What does it matter? Do you think that, in my heart, I listen to them?

TAR. They will not fail to continue, you may be sure; and these self-same stories which you now reject, may, perhaps, be listened to at another time.

ORG. No, brother, never.

TAR. Ah, brother! a wife may easily impose upon a husband.

ORG. No, no.

TAR. Allow me, by removing hence promptly, to deprive them of all subject of attack.

ORG. No, you shall remain; my life depends upon it.

TAR. Well! I must then mortify myself. If, however, you would . . .

ORG. Ah!

TAR. Be it so: let us say no more about it. But I know how to manage in this. Honor is a tender thing, and friendship enjoins me to prevent reports and causes for suspicion. I shall shun your wife, and you shall not see me . . .

ORG. No, in spite of all, you shall frequently be with her. To annoy the world is my greatest delight; and I wish you to be seen with her at all times. Nor is this all: the better to defy them all, I will have no other heir but you, and I am going forthwith to execute a formal deed of gift of all my property to you. A faithful and honest friend, whom I take for son-in-law, is dearer to me than son, wife, and parents. Will you not accept what I propose?

TAR. The will of Heaven be done in all things.

ORG. Poor fellow! Quick, let us get the draft drawn up; and then let envy itself burst with spite!

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Cleante, Tartuffe.

Cle. Yes, everyone talks about it, and you may believe me. The stir which this rumor makes is not at all to your credit; and I have just met you, sir, opportunely, to tell you my opinion in two words. I will not sift these reports to the bottom; I refrain, and take the thing at its worst. Let us suppose that Damis has not acted well, and that you have been wrongly accused; would it not be like a Christian to pardon the offense, and to smother all desire of vengeance in your heart? And ought you, on account of a dispute with you, to allow a son to be driven from his father's home? I tell you once more, and candidly, that great and small are scandalized at it; and, if you will take my advice, you will try to make peace, and not push matters to extremes. Make a sacrifice to God of your resentment, and restore a son to his father's favor.

Tar. Alas! for my own part, I would do so with all my heart. I do not bear him, sir, the slightest ill-will; I forgive him everything; I blame him for nothing; and would serve him to the best of my power. But Heaven's interest is opposed to it; and, if he comes back, I must leave the house. After his unparalleled behavior, communication with him would give rise to scandal: Heaven

knows what all the world would immediately think of it! They would impute it to sheer policy on my part; and they would say everywhere, that knowing myself to be guilty, I pretend a charitable zeal for my accuser; that I am afraid, and wish to conciliate him, in order to bribe him, in an underhand manner, into silence.

CLE. You try to put forward pretended excuses, and all your reasons, sir, are too far-fetched. Why do you charge yourself with Heaven's interests? Has it any need of us to punish the guilty? Leave to it the care of its own vengeance; think only of the pardon which it enjoins for offenses, and do not trouble yourself about men's judgments, when you are following the sovereign edicts of Heaven. What! shall the trivial regard for what men may think prevent the glory of a good action? No, no; let us always do what Heaven prescribes, and not trouble our heads with other cares.

TAR. I have already told you that from my heart I forgive him; and that, sir, is doing what Heaven commands us to do: but after the scandal and the insult of to-day, Heaven does not require me to live with him.

CLE. And does it require you, sir, to lend your ear to what a mere whim dictates to his father, and to accept the gift of a property to which in justice you have no claim whatever?

TAR. Those who know me will not think that this proceeds from self-interest. All the world's goods have but few charms for me; I am not dazzled by their deceptive glare: and should I determine to accept from his father that donation which he wishes to make to me, it is only, in truth, because I fear that all that property might fall into wicked hands; lest it might be divided amongst those who would make a bad use of it in this world, and would not employ it, as I intend, for the glory of Heaven and the well-being of my fellow-men.

CLE. Oh, sir, you need not entertain those delicate scruples, which may give cause for the rightful heir to complain. Allow him at his peril to enjoy his own, without troubling yourself in any way; and consider that it is better even that he should make a bad use of it, than that you should be accused of defrauding him of it. My only wonder is, that you could have received such a proposal unblushingly. For, after all, has true piety any maxim showing how a legitimate heir may be stripped of his property? And if Heaven has put into your head an invincible obstacle to your living with Damis, would it not be better that as a prudent man you should make a civil retreat from this, than to allow that, contrary to all reason, the son should be turned out of the house for you? Believe me, sir, this would be giving a proof of your probity . . .

TAR. Sir, it is half-past three: certain religious duties call me upstairs, and you will excuse my leaving you so soon.

CLE. (*Alone.*) Ah!

SCENE II.—ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLEANTE, DORINE.

DOR. (*To Cléante.*) For Heaven's sake, sir, bestir yourself with us for her: she is in mortal grief; and the marriage contract, which her father has resolved upon being signed this evening, drives her every moment to despair. Here he comes! Pray, let us unite our efforts, and try, by force or art, to shake this unfortunate design that causes us all this trouble.

SCENE III.—ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLEANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ah! I am glad to see you all assembled. (*To Marianne.*) There is something in this document to please you, and you know already what it means.

MAR. (*At Orgon's feet.*) Father, in the name of Heaven, which knows my grief, and by all that can move your heart, relax somewhat of your paternal rights, and absolve me from obedience in this case. Do not compel me, by this harsh command, to reproach Heaven with my duty to you; and, alas! do not make wretched the life which you have given me, father. If, contrary to the sweet expectations which I have formed, you forbid me to belong to him whom I have dared to love, kindly save me at least, I implore you on my knees, from the torment of belonging to one whom I abhor; and do not drive me to despair by exerting your full power over me.

ORG. (*Somewhat moved.*) Firm, my heart; none of this human weakness!

MAR. Your tenderness for him causes me no grief; indulge it to its fullest extent, give him your wealth, and if that be not enough, add mine to it; I consent to it with all my heart, and I leave you to dispose of it. But, at least, stop short of my own self, and allow me to end in the austerities of a convent the sad days which Heaven has allotted to me.

ORG. Ah, that is it! When a father crosses a girl's love-sick inclination, she wishes to become a nun. Get up. The more repugnance you feel in accepting him, the greater will be your merit. Mortify your senses by this marriage, and do not trouble me any longer.

DOR. But what . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue. Meddle only with what concerns you. I flatly forbid you to say another word.

CLE. If you will permit me to answer you, and advise . . .

ORG. Your advice is the best in the world, brother; it is well argued, and I set great store by it: but you must allow me not to avail myself of it.

ELM. (*To her husband.*) I am at a loss what to say, after all I have seen; and I quite admire your blindness. You must be mightily bewitched and prepossessed in his favor, to deny to us the incidents of this day.

ORG. I am your servant, and judge by appearances. I know your indulgence for my rascal of a son, and you were afraid of disowning the trick which he wished to play on the poor fellow. But, after all, you took it too quietly to be believed; and you ought to have appeared somewhat more upset.

ELM. Is our honor to bridle up so strongly at the simple avowal of an amorous transport, and can there be no reply to aught that touches it, without fury in our eyes and invectives in our mouth? As for me, I simply laugh at such talk; and the noise made about it by no means pleases me. I love to show my discreetness quietly, and am not at all like those savage prudes, whose honor is armed with claws and teeth, and who at the least word would scratch people's faces. Heaven preserve me from such good behavior! I prefer a virtue that is not diabolical, and believe that a discreet and cold denial is no less effective in repelling a lover.

ORG. In short, I know the whole affair, and will not be imposed upon.

ELM. Once more, I wonder at your strange weakness; but what would your unbelief

answer if I were to show you that you had been told the truth.

ORG. Show?

ELM. Aye.

ORG. Stuff!

ELM. But if I found the means to show you plainly? . . .

ORG. Idle stories.

ELM. What a strange man! Answer me, at least. I am not speaking of believing us; but suppose that we found a place where you could plainly see and hear everything, what would you say then of your good man?

ORG. In that case, I should say that . . . I should say nothing, for the thing cannot be.

ELM. Your delusion has lasted too long, and I have been too much taxed with imposture. I must, for my gratification, without going any farther, make you a witness of all that I have told you.

ORG. Be it so. I take you at your word. We shall see your dexterity, and how you will make good this promise.

ELM. (*To Dorine.*) Bid him come to me.

DOR. (*To Elmire.*) He is crafty, and it will be difficult, perhaps, to catch him.

ELM. (*To Dorine.*) No; people are easily duped by those whom they love, and conceit is apt to deceive itself. Bid him come down. (*To Cléante and Marianne.*) And do you retire.

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

ELM. Come, and get under this table.

ORG. Why so?

ELM. It is necessary that you should conceal yourself well.

ORG. But why under this table?

ELM. Good heavens! do as you are told; I have thought about my plan, and you shall judge. Get under there, I tell you, and, when you are there, take care not to be seen or heard.

ORG. I confess that my complaisance is great; but I must needs see the end of your enterprise.

ELM. You will have nothing, I believe, to reply to me. (*To Orgon under the table.*) Mind! I am going to meddle with a strange matter; do not be shocked in any way. I must be permitted to say what I like; and it is to convince you, as I have promised. Since I am compelled to it, I am going to make this hypocrite drop his mask by addressing soft speeches to him, flatter the shameful desires of his passion, and give him full scope for his audacity. As it is for your sake alone, and the better to confound him, that I pretend to yield to his wishes, I shall cease as soon as you show yourself, and things need not go farther than you wish. It is for you to stop his mad passion, when you think matters are carried far enough, to spare your wife, and not to expose me any more than is necessary to disabuse you. This is your business, it remains entirely with you, and[36] . . . But he comes. Keep close, and be careful not to show yourself.

SCENE V.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON (*under the table*).

TAR. I have been told that you wished to speak to me here.

ELM. Yes. Some secrets will be revealed to you. But close this door before they are told to you, and look about everywhere, for fear of a surprise. (*Tartuffe closes the door,*

and comes back.) We assuredly do not want here a scene like the one we just passed through: I never was so startled in my life. Damis put me in a terrible fright for you; and you saw, indeed, that I did my utmost to frustrate his intentions and calm his excitement. My confusion, it is true, was so great, that I had not a thought of contradicting him: but, thanks to Heaven, everything has turned out the better for that, and is upon a much surer footing. The esteem in which you are held has allayed the storm, and my husband will not take any umbrage at you. The better to brave people's ill-natured comments, he wishes us to be together at all times; and it is through this that, without fear of incurring blame, I can be closeted here alone with you; and this justifies me in opening to you my heart, a little too ready perhaps, to listen to your passion.

TAR. This language is somewhat difficult to understand, madam; and you just now spoke in quite a different strain.

ELM. Ah! how little you know the heart of a woman, if such a refusal makes you angry! and how little you understand what it means to convey, when it defends itself so feebly! In those moments our modesty always combats the tender sentiments with which we may be inspired.[37] Whatever reason we may find for the passion that subdues us, we always feel some shame in owning it. We deny it at first: but in such a way as to give you sufficiently to understand that our heart surrenders; that, for honor's sake, words oppose our wishes, and that such refusals promise everything. This is, no doubt, making a somewhat plain confession to you, and showing little regard for our modesty. But, since these words have at last escaped me, would I have been so anxious to restrain Damis, would I, pray, have so complacently listened, for such a long time, to the offer of your heart, would I have taken the matter as I have done, if the offer of that heart had had nothing in it to please me? And, when I myself would have compelled you to refuse the match that had just been proposed, what ought this entreaty to have given you to understand, but the interest I was disposed to take in you, and the vexation it would have caused me, that this marriage would have at least divided a heart that I wished all to myself?[38]

TAR. It is very sweet, no doubt, madam, to hear these words from the lips we love; their honey plentifully diffuses a suavity throughout my senses, such as they never yet tasted. The happiness of pleasing you is my highest study, and my heart reposes all its bliss in your affection; but, by your leave, this heart presumes still to have some doubt in its own felicity. I may look upon these words as a decent stratagem to compel me to break off the match that is on the point of being concluded; and, if I must needs speak candidly to you, I shall not trust to such tender words, until some of those favors, for which I sigh, have assured me of all which they intend to express, and fixed in my heart a firm belief of the charming kindness which you intend for me.

ELM. (*After having coughed to warn her husband.*) What! would you proceed so fast, and exhaust the tenderness of one's heart at once? One takes the greatest pains to make you the sweetest declarations; meanwhile is not that enough for you? and will nothing content you, but pushing things to the utmost extremity?

TAR. The less a blessing is deserved, the less one presumes to expect it. Our love

dares hardly rely upon words. A lot full of happiness is difficult to realize, and we wish to enjoy it before believing in it. As for me, who think myself so little deserving of your favors, I doubt the success of my boldness; and shall believe nothing, madam, until you have convinced my passion by real proofs.

ELM. Good heavens! how very tyrannically your love acts! And into what a strange confusion it throws me! What a fierce sway it exercises over our hearts! and how violently it clamors for what it desires! What! can I find no shelter from your pursuit? and will you scarcely give me time to breathe? Is it decent to be so very exacting, and to insist upon your demands being satisfied immediately; and thus, by your pressing efforts, to take advantage of the weakness which you see one has for you?

TAR. But if you look upon my addresses with a favorable eye, why refuse me convincing proofs?

ELM. But how can I comply with what you wish, without offending that Heaven of which you are always speaking?

TAR. If it be nothing but Heaven that opposes itself to my wishes, it is a trifle for me to remove such an obstacle; and that need be no restraint upon your love.

ELM. But they frighten us so much with the judgments of Heaven!

TAR. I can dispel these ridiculous fears for you, madam, and I possess the art of allaying scruples. Heaven, it is true, forbids certain gratifications, but there are ways and means of compounding such matters.[39] According to our different wants, there is a science which loosens that which binds our conscience, and which rectifies the evil of the act with the purity of our intentions.[40] We shall be able to initiate you into these secrets, madam; you have only to be led by me. Satisfy my desires, and have no fear; I shall be answerable for everything, and shall take the sin upon myself. (*Elmire coughs louder.*) You cough very much, madam?

ELM. Yes, I am much tormented.

TAR. Would you like a piece of this liquorice?

ELM. It is an obstinate cold, no doubt; and I know that all the liquorice in the world will do it no good.

TAR. That, certainly, is very sad.

ELM. Yes, more than I can say.

TAR. In short, your scruples, madam, are easily overcome. You may be sure of the secret being kept, and there is no harm done unless the thing is bruited about. The scandal which it causes constitutes the offense, and sinning in secret is no sinning at all.

ELM. (*After having coughed once more.*) In short, I see that I must make up my mind to yield; that I must consent to grant you everything; and that with less than that, I ought not to pretend to satisfy you or to be believed (?). It is no doubt very hard to go to that length, and it is greatly in spite of myself that I venture thus far; but, since people persist in driving me to this; since they will not credit aught I may say, and wish for more convincing proofs, I can but resolve to act thus, and satisfy them.[41] If this gratification offends, so much the worse for those who force me to it: the fault ought surely not to be mine.

TAR. Yes, madam, I take it upon myself; and the thing in itself . . .

ELM. Open this door a little, and see, pray, if my husband be not in that gallery.

TAR. What need is there to take so much thought about him? Between ourselves, he is easily led by the nose. He is likely to

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE

ACT IV SCENE VII

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

THE SCENE OF THE AWAKENING OF ORGON. ELMIRE IN ORDER TO CONVINCE HER HUSBAND GRANTS AN INTERVIEW TO TARTUFFE, AND, HAVING HIDDEN ORGON BENEATH THE TABLE, SHE PRETENDS TO BE AT LAST WILLING TO YIELD TO TARTUFFE. JUST AS MATTERS SEEM LIKELY TO PROVE EMBARRASSING FOR HER, ORGON COMES FROM BENEATH THE TABLE AND IMMEDIATELY ORDERS TARTUFFE OUT OF THE HOUSE. AT LAST THE HYPOCRITE UNMASKS AND GIVES FURTHER PROOF OF HIS VILLAINY BY TURNING THE TABLES ON ORGON, CLAIMING, BY THE DEED OF GIFT LATELY EXECUTED, THAT HE IS MASTER. WITH THIS FINAL SHAFT HE DEPARTS, LEAVING ORGON AND ELMIRE OVERCOME WITH ASTONISHMENT.

[illegible] gently rest upon words. A [illegible] full of [illegible] difficult to realize, and we wish [illegible] believing in it. As for [illegible] myself so little deserving of [illegible] I doubt the success of my boldness [illegible] and shall believe nothing, madam, until you have convinced my passion by real proofs.

ELM. Good heavens! how very tyrannically your love acts! And into what a strange confusion it throws me! What a [illegible] it exercises over our hearts! and how [illegible] it clamors for what it desires! What [illegible] I find no [illegible] you [illegible] time to [illegible] upon [illegible] diately [illegible]

TAR. [illegible] me convinc[illegible] with [illegible] offending that Heaven of which you [illegible] Heaven that [illegible] me to remove such an obstacle; and that need be no restraint upon your love.

ELM. But they [illegible]

TAR. [illegible] scruples. Heaven, it is true, [illegible] gratifications, but there are [illegible] to our different wants, there is [illegible] loosens that which [illegible] which rectifies the evil of the [illegible] purity of our intentions. [illegible] to initiate you into these [illegible]

you have only to be led by me. Satisfy my desires, and have no fear; I shall be answerable for everything, and shall take the sin upon myself. (*Elmire coughs louder.*) You cough very much, madam?

ELM. Yes, I am much tormented.

TAR. Would you like a piece of this liquorice?

ELM. It is an obstinate cold, no doubt; and I know that all the liquorice in the world will do it no good.

TAR. That [illegible] is very sad.

[illegible] say.

TAR. [illegible] madam, are [illegible] sure of the [illegible] harm done [illegible] The scan[illegible] offense, and [illegible]

ELM. [illegible] to yield; [illegible] to grant you [illegible] not to [illegible] believed (?). It is no doubt very hard to go to that length, and it is greatly in spite of [illegible] people persist in driving me to this [illegible] they will not credit aught I may say, and wish for more convincing proofs. I can but resolve [illegible] the fruit ought surely not [illegible]

TAR. Yes, [illegible], I take it upon myself; and the thing in [illegible]

ELM. Open this door a little, and see, pray, if my husband be not in that gallery.

TAR. What need is there to take so much thought about him? Between ourselves, he is easily led by the nose. He is likely to

glory in all our interviews, and I have brought him so far that he will see everything, and without believing anything.

ELM. It matters not. Go, pray, for a moment and look carefully everywhere outside.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, ELMIRE.

ORG. (*Coming from under the table.*) This is, I admit to you, an abominable wretch! I cannot recover myself, and all this perfectly stuns me.

ELM. What, you come out so soon! You are surely jesting. Get under the table-cloth again; it is not time yet. Stay to the end, to be quite sure of the thing, and do not trust at all to mere conjectures.

ORG. No, nothing more wicked ever came out of hell.

ELM. Good heavens! you ought not to believe things so lightly. Be fully convinced before you give in; and do not hurry for fear of being mistaken.[42] (*Elmire pushes Orgon behind her.*)

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON.

TAR. (*Without seeing Orgon.*) Everything conspires, madam, to my satisfaction. I have surveyed the whole apartment; there is no one there; and my delighted soul . . . (*At the moment that Tartuffe advances with open arms to embrace Elmire, she draws back, and Tartuffe perceives Orgon.*)

ORG. (*Stopping Tartuffe.*) Gently! you are too eager in your amorous transports, and you ought not to be so impetuous. Ha, ha, good man, you wished to victimize me! How you are led away by temptations! You would marry my daughter and covet my wife! I have been a long while in doubt whether you were in earnest, and I always expected you would change your tone; but this is pushing the proof far enough; I am satisfied, and wish for no more.

ELM. (*To Tartuffe.*) It is much against my inclinations that I have done this: but I have been driven to the necessity of treating you thus.

TAR. (*To Orgon.*) What! do you believe . . .

ORG. Come, pray, no more. Decamp, and without ceremony.

TAR. My design.[43]

ORG. These speeches are no longer of any use; you must get out of this house, and forthwith.

TAR. It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me, I will make you know it, and show you plainly enough that it is useless to resort to these cowardly tricks to pick a quarrel with me; that one cannot safely, as one thinks, insult me; that I have the means of confounding and of punishing imposture, of avenging offended Heaven, and of making those repent who talk of turning me out hence.

SCENE VIII.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

ELM. What language is this? and what does he mean?

ORG. I am, in truth, all confusion, and this is no laughing matter.

ELM. How so?

ORG. I perceive my mistake by what he says; and the deed of gift troubles my mind.

ELM. The deed of gift?

ORG. Yes. The thing is done. But something else disturbs me too.

ELM. And what?

ORG. You shall know all. But first let us go and see if a certain box is still upstairs.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ORGON, CLEANTE.

CLE. Where would you run to?

ORG. Indeed! how can I tell?

CLE. It seems to me that we should begin by consulting together what had best be done in this emergency.

ORG. This box troubles me sorely. It makes me despair more than all the rest.

CLE. This box then contains an important secret?

ORG. It is a deposit that Argas himself, the friend whom I pity, entrusted secretly to my own hands. He selected me for this in his flight; and from what he told me, it contains documents upon which his life and fortune depend.

CLE. Why, then, did you confide it into other hands?

ORG. It was from a conscientious motive. I straightway confided the secret to the wretch; and his arguing persuaded me to give this box into his keeping, so that, in case of an inquiry, I might be able to deny it by a ready subterfuge, by which my conscience might have full absolution for swearing against the truth."

CLE. This is critical, at least, to judge from appearances; and the deed of gift, and his confidence, have been, to tell you my mind, steps too inconsiderately taken. You may be driven far with such pledges; and

since the fellow has these advantages over you, it is a great imprudence on your part to drive him to extremities; and you ought to seek some gentler method.

ORG. What! to hide such a double-dealing heart, so wicked a soul, under so fair an appearance of touching fervor! And I who received him in my house a beggar and penniless . . . It is all over; I renounce all pious people. Henceforth I shall hold them in utter abhorrence, and be worse to them than the very devil.

CLE. Just so; you exaggerate again. You never preserve moderation in anything. You never keep within reason's bounds, and always rush from one extreme to another. You see your mistake, and find out that you have been imposed upon by a pretended zeal. But is there any reason why, in order to correct yourself, you should fall into a greater error still, and say that all pious people have the same feelings as that perfidious rascal? What! because a scoundrel has audaciously deceived you, under the pompous show of outward austerity, you will needs have it that everyone is like him, and that there is no really pious man to be found nowadays? Leave those foolish deductions to free-thinkers; distinguish between real virtue and its counterfeit; never bestow your esteem too hastily, and keep in this the necessary middle course. Beware, if possible, of honoring imposture; but do not attack true piety also; and if you must fall into an extreme, rather offend again on the other side.

SCENE II.—ORGON, CLEANTE, DAMIS.

DAM. What! father, is it true that this scoundrel threatens you? that he forgets all that you have done for him, and that his cowardly and too contemptible pride turns your kindness for him against yourself?

ORG. Even so, my son; and it causes me unutterable grief.

DAM. Leave him to me; I will slice his ears off. Such insolence must not be tolerated; it is my duty to deliver you from him at once; and, to put an end to this matter, I must knock him down.

CLE. Spoken just like a regular youth. Moderate, if you please, these violent transports. We live under a government, and in an age, in which violence only makes matters worse.

SCENE III.—MADAM PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLEANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

MAD. P. What is all this? What dreadful things do I hear!

ORG. Some novelties which my own eyes have witnessed, and you see how I am repaid for my kindness. I affectionately harbor a fellow creature in his misery; I shelter him and treat him as my own brother; I heap favors upon him every day; I give him my daughter, and everything I possess: and, at that very moment, the perfidious, infamous wretch forms the wicked design of seducing my wife; and, not content even with these vile attempts, he dares to threaten me with my own favors; and, to encompass my ruin, wishes to take advantage of my indiscreet good nature, drive me from my property which I have transferred to him, and reduce me to that condition from which I rescued him!

DOR. Poor fellow!

MAD. P. I can never believe, my son, that he would commit so black a deed.

ORG. What do you mean?

MAD. P. Good people are always envied.

ORG. What do you mean by all this talk, mother?

MAD. P. That there are strange goings-on in your house, and that we know but too well the hatred they bear him.

ORG. What has this hatred to do with what I have told you?

MAD. P. I have told you a hundred times, when a boy,

> "That virtue here is persecuted ever;
> That envious men may die, but envy never."

ORG. But in what way does this bear upon to-day's doings?

MAD. P. They may have concocted a hundred idle stories against him.

ORG. I have already told you that I have seen everything myself.

MAD. P. The malice of slanderers is very great.

ORG. You will make me swear, mother. I tell you that with my own eyes I have witnessed this daring crime.

MAD. P. Evil tongues have always venom to scatter abroad, and nothing here below can guard against it.

ORG. That is a very senseless remark. I have seen it, I say, seen with my own eyes, seen, what you call seen. Am I to din it a hundred times in your ears, and shout like four people?

MAD. P. Goodness me! appearances most frequently deceive: you must not always judge by what you see.

ORG. I am boiling with rage!

MAD. P. Human nature is liable to false suspicions, and good is often construed into evil.

ORG. I must construe the desire to embrace my wife into a charitable design!

MAD. P. It is necessary to have good reasons for accusing people; and you ought to have waited until you were quite certain of the thing.

ORG. How the deuce could I be more certain? Ought I to have waited, mother, until to my very eyes, he had . . . You will make me say some foolish thing.

MAD. P. In short, his soul is too full of pure zeal; and I cannot at all conceive that he would have attempted the things laid to his charge.

ORG. Go, my passion is so great that, if you were not my mother, I do not know what I might say to you.

DOR. (*To Orgon.*) A just reward of things here below, sir; you would not believe anyone, and now they will not believe you.

CLE. We are wasting in mere trifling, the time that should be employed in devising some measures. We must not remain inactive when a knave threatens.

DAM. What! would his effrontery go to that extent?

ELM. As for me, I hardly think it possible, and his ingratitude here shows itself too plainly.

CLE. (*To Orgon.*) Do not trust to that; he will find some means to justify his doings against you; and for less than this, a powerful party[45] has involved people in a vexatious maze. I tell you once more, that, armed with what he has, you should never have pushed him thus far.

ORG. True enough; but what could I do? I was unable to master my resentment at the presumption of the wretch.

CLE. I wish, with all my heart, that we could patch up even a shadow of peace between you two.

ELM. Had I but known how he was armed against us, I would have avoided bringing things to such a crisis; and my . . .

ORG. (*To Dorine, seeing M. Loyal come in.*) What does this man want? Go and see, quickly. I am in a fine state for people to come to see me!

SCENE IV.—ORGON, MADAM PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLEANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, M. LOYAL.

M. LOY. (*To Dorine, at the farther part of the stage.*) Good-morning, dear sister;[46] pray, let me speak to your master.

DOR. He is engaged; and I doubt whether he can see anyone at present.

M. LOY. I do not intend to be intrusive in his own house. I believe that my visit will have nothing to displease him. I have come upon a matter of which he will be very glad.

DOR. Your name?

M. LOY. Only tell him that I am come from Monsieur Tartuffe, for his good.

DOR. (*To Orgon.*) This is a man who comes, in a gentle way, from Monsieur Tartuffe, upon some business, of which he says, you will be very glad.

CLE. (*To Orgon.*) You must see who this man is, and what he wants.

ORG. (*To Cléante.*) Perhaps he comes to reconcile us. How shall I receive him?

CLE. You must not allow your anger to get the upper hand, and if he speaks of an arrangement, you should listen to him.

M. LOY. (*To Orgon.*) Your servant, sir! May Heaven punish those who would harm you, and may it favor you as much as I wish!

ORG. (*Softly, to Cléante.*) This mild beginning confirms my opinion, and augurs already some reconciliation.

M. LOY. Your whole family has always been dear to me, and I served your father.

ORG. I am ashamed, sir, and crave your pardon for not knowing you or your name.

M. LOY. My name is Loyal, a native of Normandy,[47] and I am a tipstaff to the court in spite of envy.[48] For the last forty years, I have had the happiness, thanking Heaven, of exercising the functions thereof with much honor; and I have come, with your leave, sir, to serve you with a writ of a certain decree . . .

ORG. What! you are here . . .

M. LOY. Let us proceed without anger, sir. It is nothing but a summons; a notice to quit this house, you and yours, to remove your chattels, and to make room for others, without delay or remissness, as required hereby.

ORG. I! leave this house!

M. LOY. Yes, sir, if you please. The house at present, as you well know, belongs incontestably to good Monsieur Tartuffe. Of all your property, he is henceforth lord and master, by virtue of a contract of which I am the bearer. It is in due form, and nothing can be said against it.

DAM. (*To M. Loyal.*) Certainly this impudence is immense, and I admire it!

M. LOY. (*To Damis.*) Sir, my business lies not with you; (*pointing to Orgon*) it is with this gentleman. He is both reasonable and mild, and knows too well the duty of an honest man to oppose the law in any way.

ORG. But . . .

M. LOY. Yes, sir, I know that you would not rebel for a million of money, and that, like a gentleman, you will allow me to execute here the orders which I have received.

DAM. Mr. Tipstaff, you may chance to get your black gown well dusted here.

M. LOY. (*To Orgon.*) Order your son to hold his tongue or to retire, sir. I should be very loth to have recourse to writing, and to see your name figure in my official report.

DOR. (*Aside.*) This M. Loyal has a very disloyal air.

M. LOY. Having a great deal of sympathy with all honest people, I charged myself with these documents, sir, as much to oblige and please you, as to avoid the choice of those, who, not having the same consideration for you that inspires me, might have proceeded in a less gentle way.

ORG. And what can be worse than to order people to quit their own house?

M. LOY. You are allowed time, and I shall suspend until to-morrow the execution of the writ, sir. I shall come only to pass the night here with ten of my people without noise or without scandal. For form's sake, you must, if you please, before going to bed, bring me the keys of your door. I shall take care not to disturb your rest, and to permit nothing which is not right. But to-morrow, you must be ready in the morning, to clear the house of even the smallest utensil; my people shall assist you, and I have selected strong ones, so that they can help you to remove everything. One cannot act better than I do, I think; and as I am treating you with great indulgence, I entreat you also, sir, to profit by it, so that I may not be annoyed in the execution of my duty.

ORG. (*Aside.*) I would willingly give just now the best hundred gold pieces of what remains to me for the pleasure of striking on this snout the soundest blow that ever was dealt.

CLE. (*Softly, to Orgon.*) Leave well alone. Do not let us make things worse.

DAM. I can hardly restrain myself at this strange impertinence, and my fingers are itching.

DOR. Upon my word, M. Loyal, with such a broad back, a few cudgel blows would do you no harm.

M. LOY. We might easily punish these infamous words, sweetheart; and there is a law against women too.

CLE. (*To Monsieur Loyal.*) Pray, let us put an end to all this, sir. Hand over this paper quickly, and leave us.

M. LOY. Till by-and-by. May Heaven bless you all!

ORG. And may it confound you, and him who sends you!

SCENE V. — ORGON, MADAM PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLEANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

ORG. Well! mother, do you see now whether I am right; and you may judge of the rest from the writ. Do you at last perceive his treacheries?

MAD. P. I stand aghast, and feel as if dropped from the clouds!

DOR. (*To Orgon.*) You are wrong to complain, you are wrong to blame him, and his pious designs are confirmed by this. His virtue is perfected in the love for his neighbor. He knows that worldly goods often corrupt people, and he wishes, from pure charity, to take everything away from you which might become an obstacle to your salvation.

ORG. Hold your tongue. I must always be saying that to you.

CLE. (*To Orgon.*) Let us consult what had best be done.

ELM. Go and expose the audacity of the ungrateful wretch. This proceeding destroys the validity of the contract; and his treachery will appear too black to allow him to meet with the success which we surmise.

SCENE VI. — VALERE, ORGON, MADAM PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLEANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

VAL. It is with great regret, sir, that I come to afflict you; but I see myself compelled to it by pressing danger. A most intimate and faithful friend, who knows the interest which I take in you, has, for my sake, by a most hazardous step, violated the secrecy due to the affairs of the State, and has just sent me an intimation, in consequence of which you will be obliged to flee immediately. The scoundrel who has long imposed upon you has an hour since accused you to the king, and amongst other charges which he brings against you, has lodged in his hands important documents of a state-criminal, of which, he says, contrary to the duty of a subject, you have kept the guilty secret. I am ignorant of the details of the crime laid to your charge; but a warrant is out against you; and the better to execute it, he himself is to accompany the person who is to arrest you.

CLE. These are his armed rights; and by this the traitor seeks to make himself master of your property.

ORG. The man is, I own to you, a wicked brute!

VAL. The least delay may be fatal to you. I have my coach at the door to carry you off, with a thousand louis which I bring you. Let us lose no time; the blow is terrible, and is one of those which are best parried by flight. I offer myself to conduct you to a place of safety, and will accompany you to the end of your flight.

ORG. Alas, what do I not owe to your obliging cares! I must await another opportunity to thank you; and I implore Heaven to be propitious enough to enable me one day to acknowledge this generous service. Farewell: be careful, the rest of you . . .

CLE. Go quickly. We will endeavor, brother, to do what is necessary.

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, A POLICE OFFICER, MADAM PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLEANTE, MARIANNE, VALERE, DAMIS, DORINE.

TAR. (*Stopping Orgon.*) Gently, sir, gently, do not run so fast. You will not have to go far to find a lodging; we take you a prisoner in the king's name.

ORG. Wretch! you have reserved this blow for the last; this is the stroke, villain, by which you dispatch me; and which crowns all your perfidies.

TAR. Your abuse cannot incense me; Heaven has taught me to suffer everything.

CLE. Your moderation is great, I confess.

DAM. How impudently the villain sports with Heaven!

TAR. All your outrages cannot move me in the least; and I think of nothing but my duty.

MAR. You may glorify yourself very much upon this; and this task is very honorable for you to undertake.

TAR. A task cannot but be glorious when it proceeds from the power that sends me hither.

ORG. But do you remember, ungrateful wretch, that my charitable hand raised you from a miserable condition?

TAR. Yes, I know what help I received from you; but the king's interest is my first duty. The just obligation of this sacred duty stifles all gratitude of my heart; and to such a powerful consideration, I would sacrifice friend, wife, kindred, and myself with them.

ELM. The hypocrite!

DOR. How artfully he makes himself a lovely cloak of all that is sacred.

CLE. But if this zeal, which guides you, and upon which you plume yourself so much, be so perfect as you say, why has it not shown itself until Orgon caught you trying to seduce his wife; and why did you not think of denouncing him until his honor obliged him to drive you from his house? I do not say that the gift of all his property, which he has made over to you, ought to have turned you from your duty; but why, wishing to treat him as a criminal to-day, did you consent to take aught from him?

TAR. (*To the Officer.*) Pray, sir, deliver me from this clamor, and be good enough to execute your orders.

OFFI. Yes, we have no doubt delayed too long to discharge them; your words remind me of this just in time; and to execute them, follow me directly to the prison which is destined for your abode.[49]

TAR. Who? I, sir?

OFFI. Yes, you.

TAR. Why to prison?

OFFI. I have no account to give to you. (*To Orgon.*) Compose yourself, sir, after so great an alarm. We live under a monarch, an enemy of fraud, a monarch whose eyes penetrate into the heart, and whom all the art of impostors cannot deceive. Blessed with great discernment, his lofty soul looks clearly at things; it is never betrayed by exaggeration, and his sound reason falls into no excess. He bestows lasting glory on men of worth; but he shows this zeal without blindness, and his love for sincerity does not close his heart to the horror which falsehood must inspire.[50] Even this person could not hoodwink him, and he has guarded himself against more artful snares. He soon perceived, by his subtle penetration, all the vileness concealed in his inmost heart. In coming to accuse you, he has betrayed himself, and, by a just stroke of supreme justice, discovered himself to the king as a notorious rogue, against whom information had been laid under another name. His life is a long series of wicked actions, of which whole volumes might be written. Our monarch, in short, has detested his vile ingratitude and disloyalty toward you, has joined this affair to his other misdeeds, and has placed me under his orders, only to see his impertinence carried out to the end, and to make him by himself give you satisfaction for everything. Yes, he wishes me to strip the wretch of all your documents which he professes to possess, and to give them into your hands. By his sovereign power he annuls the obligations of the contract which gave him all your property, and lastly, pardons you this secret offense, in which the flight of a friend has involved you; and it is the reward of your former zeal in upholding his rights, to show that he knows how to recompense a good action when least thought of; that merit never loses aught with him; and that he remembers good much better than evil.[51]

DOR. Heaven be praised!

MAD. P. I breathe again.

ELM. Favorable success!

MAR. Who dared foretell this?

ORG. (*To Tartuffe, whom the officer leads off.*) Well, wretch, there you are . . .

SCENE VIII.—MADAM PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLEANTE, VALERE, DAMIS, DORINE.

CLE. Ah! brother, stop; and do not descend to indignities. Leave the wretch to

his fate, and do not add to the remorse that overwhelms him. Rather wish that his heart, from this day, may be converted to virtue; that he may reform his life, in detesting his vice, and soften the justice of our great prince; while you throw yourself at his knees to render thanks for his goodness, which has treated you so leniently.

ORG. Yes, it is well said. Let us throw ourselves joyfully at his feet, to laud the kindness which his heart displays to us. Then, having acquainted ourselves of this first duty, we must apply ourselves to the just cares of another, and, by a sweet union, crown in Valère the flame of a generous and sincere lover.

NOTES

[1] This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, we find "the dress for Orgon consisting of a doublet, breeches, and cloak of black *vénitienne*, the cloak lined with tabby and adorned with English lace, the garters, rosettes of the shoes, and the shoes adorned in the same manner." Madam Molière played the part of Elmire.

[2] The original has *sergent*. The tipstaffs of the upper court were called *huissiers*; in Paris, *huissiers à verge*; and of a lower court, *sergents*.

[3] The original has *exempt*, from the verb *exempter*, to be free from, because formerly non-commissioned officers of the cavalry, who commanded in the absence of their superiors, were free from all other duties, and were *exempt*; such officers commanded the *maréchaussée*, or prevotal guard, when it arrested anyone.

[4] *Pétaud*, from the Latin *peto*, I ask, was formerly the name of the chief of the beggars in France. As his subordinates were very unruly, a house where everybody gave orders was called figuratively "the court of King Pétaud." In Mr. Clare's translation, mentioned in the Introductory Notice, this court is called "Dover's Court."

[5] According to Grimarest's *Vie de Molière*, our author went into the dressing-room of his wife—who was going to play the part of Elmire—a quarter of an hour before the piece began. He found her clothed in a magnificent dress, which she had put on without telling her husband of it. Molière insisted that she should put it off, and take one more in accordance with Elmire's character. I am afraid that this anecdote rests only on mere tradition; still it proves that Mrs. Orgon was too well dressed to suit even the taste of her mother-in-law.

[6] The original has *pied-plat*, flat foot,—I suppose on account of an imaginary connection between a high instep and aristocratic descent.

[7] This is said to be an allusion to Olympia Mancini, Countess de Soissons, who spread a report, and even informed the queen, of the rising love of Louis XIV. for Mademoiselle de la Vallière. See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*.

[8] This is said to be a hit at the Duchess de Navailles (see Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*), who caused iron railings to be placed at the entrance of the rooms of the maids of honor, in order to prevent Louis XIV. from visiting Mademoiselle de Lamothe Houdancourt. The duchess owed her fortune to Cardinal Mazarin, whose intrigues she had aided during the troubles of the Fronde, when she was Mademoiselle de Neuillant.

[9] The *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice to this play) mentions a couplet of Madam Pernelle, and a biting answer of Cléante, which were spoken at the first representation of *Tartuffe*, then called *l'Imposteur*, and which, no doubt, Molière afterward suppressed.

[10] Madam Pernelle says "the Tower of Babylon," instead of "the Tower of Babel." A certain Jesuit, Caussin (1583–1651), wrote in one of his books, *The Holy Court*, that "men built the Tower of Babel, and women the tower of Babble (*Babil*)."

[11] This refers to the troubles of the Fronde, during the minority of Louis XIV.

[12] The *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* shows that this play was originally somewhat different here.

[13] All the original editions have the following note, which may probably be attributed to Molière: "It is a servant who speaks."

[14] This book was called *Flos Sanctorum, o libro de la las vidas de los Santos*, and was written by Pedro Ribadeneira, a celebrated Spanish Jesuit (1527–1611). It was translated into French as *Fleurs des vies des Saints*, and published in Paris in 1641, and at Lyons in 1666, in two folio volumes; and later in English, as *Lives of the Saints*, and in the same number of volumes. There was also another book, originally in French, with the same title, written by a Jesuit, Bonnefons, published first in 1663, and which had already reached its third edition in 1664.

[15] This line has given rise to many different readings; but according to the *Lettre sur l'Imposteur*, and of which a *résumé* is given in the Introductory Notice to this play, Orgon intends to quote all the good qualities of Tartuffe, and can find nothing else to say of him but that he is a man.

[16] Molière takes care to demonstrate, from the very beginning, that Tartuffe is a hypocrite, and the whole speech of Orgon shows him to be so. The killing of the flea is taken from the life of Saint Macarius in Giacomo da Voragine (1230–1298), *Historia Lombardica, seu Legenda Sanctorum*, which was more familiarly known as the *Legenda aurea*, or *Golden Legend*. The first English edition was one of the books which Caxton printed and published in 1483. The story is thus related, by the Rev. Alban Butler, in *The Lives of the Saints*: "Saint Macarius happened one day to kill a gnat that was biting him in his cell; reflecting that he had lost the opportunity of suffering that mortification, he hastened from the cell for the marshes of Scetê, which abound with great flies, whose stings pierce even wild boars. There he continued six months, exposed to those ravaging insects; and to such a degree was his whole body disfigured by them with sores and swellings, that when he returned he was only to be known by his voice."

[17] The original has *libertinage*, which, as well as *libertin*, libertine, was formerly employed in French, as well as in English, in speaking of those who took great liberty with the belief generally entertained.

[18] The original has *dévots de place*. In former times, servants who wished to be hired went to the market-place to show themselves; these were called *domestiques de place*; hence Molière coined *dévots de place*.

[19] Several of Molière's annotators greatly praise this first act, which gives, as it were, a key to the whole comedy. We see at one glance the interior of Orgon's household: the silly talk of an old woman; the foolish infatuation of the master of the house for Tartuffe; the pretended religious zeal of that hypocrite; the quiet reserve of Elmire; the impetuosity of Damis, the son; the sound philosophy of Cléante; the familiarity and sharpness of the servant Dorine; the gentle timidity of Marianne,—everything which afterward comes out in the play is foreshadowed there, even the passion of Tartuffe for Elmire. This first act also shows how everything in the house is in dire confusion; religious war rages there with all the intensity of the *odium theologicum*; the grandmother has become the foe of her son's children; the father wishes to tyrannize over his daughter and everyone else; whilst, on the other side, Damis is always in a rage, Dorine forever on the verge of impudence, and even the calm Cléante appears to have some difficulty in keeping his temper. The spirit with which Molière opens the first act is kept up throughout the whole piece.

[20] It is from this "most likely little place" that Damis, in the third scene of the third act, overhears Tartuffe declaring his love to Elmire. Molière always takes care to throw out such hints, in order to prepare the mind for what is to come.

[21] The original has *sot*, which often meant also a victimized husband.

[22] The original has "*Monsieur Tartuffe . . . n'est pas un homme . . . qui se mouche du pied*;" literally, "Mr. Tartuffe . . . is not a man who blows his nose with his foot." To pretend to blow one's nose with one's foot was considered a favorite trick of jugglers and acrobats; hence a man who could do such a thing was no fool.

[23] The *bailli*, whose office dates probably from the eleventh century, was the representative of the king or lord in the northern provinces of France; whilst in the west and south he was called the *sénéchal*. But, in Molière's time, the duties of their office had been much reduced; they could no longer call out the military force, or regulate the finances of any province. They were simply a kind of minor judges, though nominally at the head of the provincial nobility.

[24] In French, *l'élue*. The *élue* was a kind of assessor who regulated the taxes.

[25] A folding-chair was always given to people of inferior rank to sit on when in the presence of their superiors.

[26] In French *la grand' bande*. In Molière's time any band of musicians was called *une bande*, just as in English "band" is used now. There was then at court *la bande des Vingt-Quatre*, or the great violins, and *la petite bande*, or the little violins, of which Lulli was the conductor. There was also a third *bande*, that of the *Grande-Ecurie*.

[27] Fagotin was the name of a famous trained monkey, very much admired in Paris in Molière's time. La Fontaine mentions him in his fable of *The Court of the Lion*.

[28] This is the third time the audience has heard that Tartuffe loves Elmire, and Molière does this in order that the public should not afterward be too suddenly horrified when the hypocrite is unmasked.

[29] The foul hero of the play only makes his appearance now, in the second scene of the third act. According to the *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice, page 21), this was done by Molière on purpose, because such a character could appear only when the action was in full force.

[30] Rabelais, in the sixteenth chapter of the second book of *Pantagruel*, says of Panurge: "When he came into the company of some good ladies, he would trifle them into a discourse of some fine workmanship of bone-lace, and then immediately put his hand into their bosom, asking them, 'And this work, is it of Flanders or of Hainault?'"

[31] Some annotators of Molière pretend that he took this line from Corneille's tragedy, *Sertorius*, where we find, "And though I am a Roman, I am not the less a man." It is also found in the eighth tale of the third day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

[32] Boccaccio's *Féronde* uses some of Tartuffe's expressions in the tale mentioned in note 31. Regnier's *Macette* says also: "More discreet, they (the hypocrites) know, in loving, to give more satisfaction, though with less ostentation."

[33] Compare this speech of Tartuffe with Montufar's, in Scarron's tale, *The Hypocrites*, in the Introductory Notice to this play, page 11.

[34] Some actors, whilst playing the part of Tartuffe, do not move whilst Orgon is shouting, "Do not hold me back." But Molière can never have intended to let the spectator suppose that Tartuffe wished Damis to be beaten. On the contrary, his pretended opposition to Orgon's passion heightens his influence; for an angry father, when his passion is abated, cannot take it amiss that a stranger prevents him from chastising his son.

[35] According to tradition,—a tradition supported by the actor Baron, a pupil of Molière,—this line was originally, "Forgive him, O Heaven, as I forgive him;" but it was altered, because some people said it was a parody on a passage in the Lord's Prayer.

[36] These words of Elmire are, in reality, addressed to the audience, to remind them of the necessity of unmasking the hypocrite; they contain also an excuse for her farther behavior; for, in spite of her modesty, she is compelled to give convincing proof to her husband that Tartuffe is a scoundrel.

[37] In the original French there is a delicacy which can hardly be rendered into English. Elmire almost always avoids the use of a personal pronoun, but employs the indefinite *on* during the whole of this scene. This may be grammatically wrong, but is, dramatically, eminently successful. We give, as an example, the following four lines in the original:

"Quelque raison qu'on trouve à l'amour qui nous dompte,
On trouve à l'avouer toujours un peu de honte.
On s'en défend d'abord: mais de l'air qu'on s'y prend
On fait connaitre assez que notre cœur se rend."

[38] Here, again, there is a delicacy in the original French which cannot be rendered into English. Elmire is full of hesitation in what she is going to say, and she expresses this even in her grammar, which, although far from clear, beautifully reflects the trouble of her mind. We give the last four lines of her speech, crowded with *que*. I agree with Sainte-Beuve that Molière placed them there purposely.

"Qu'est-ce que cette instance a dû vous faire entendre,
Que l'intérêt qu'en vous on s'avise de prendre,
Et l'ennui qu'on aurait que ce noeud qu'on résout
Vint partager du moins un cœur que l'on veut tout?"

[39] In the original edition there is a note saying, "It is a scoundrel who speaks."

[40] Pascal uses nearly the same words in the seventh *Provinciale*: "When we cannot prevent the action, we purify at least the intention; and thus we correct vice by means of the purity of the end." The Jansenists considered for some time the *Tartuffe* as a sequel to Pascal's Letters. Machiavelli, in the *Mandragore*, makes Friar Timotheo use the same arguments in order to persuade a married woman to procure an heir to her husband.

[41] See note 37. Elmire, of course, uses *on* here to designate Orgon, though Tartuffe takes it for himself. If she had not used this indefinite pronoun from the very beginning, the hypocrite's suspicions might have been roused. We give the last four lines in the original:

"Mais, puisque l'on s'obstine à m'y vouloir réduire,
Puisqu'on ne veut point croire à tout ce qu'on peut dire,
Et qu'on veut des témoins qui soient plus convaincants,
Il faut bien s'y résoudre, et contenter les gens."

[42] Elmire does not joke with Orgon, but is really angry that she has been obliged to do violence to her innate modesty, in order to convince him.

[43] Tartuffe, no doubt, was going to say, "My design was to put to the proof the virtue of your wife." The often-mentioned *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* says that Tartuffe here calls Orgon his brother, and begins to justify himself. Molière most probably modified this passage.

[44] Tartuffe has taught Orgon the doctrine of "mental reservation," just as he wished to teach Elmire that of "purity of intention." Pascal attacks those casuistical subtleties in the ninth *Provinciale*.

[45] The original has *cabale*

[46] M. Loyal, in employing the words "dear sister," shows at once that he is worthy of being employed by Tartuffe.

[47] The Normans had the reputation of being very cautious (*avisé*)—the Scotch express it by "pawky"—and also of being very fond of going to law; hence the allusion. The original has *huissier à verge*.

[48] See note 2.

[49] This is a just counterpart of the *deus ex machina* of Tartuffe, when he says, in the seventh scene of the fourth act, to Orgon, "It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me, I will make you know it."

[50] This praise was not wholly undeserved in 1669; although there seems to me rather too much of it. When *Tartuffe* was played during the first French Revolution, these lines were altered to suit the times, and, of course, the praise of the king was omitted.

[51] The analysis of the officer's speech given in the so-often-quoted *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* proves that it was different from what it now is. In speaking of Louis XIV., he says that "the prince had seen into the heart of the wretch, by an intuition, which monarchs possess above all other men, that calumny is abashed by his mere presence," and that he dislikes hypocrisy as much as it has influence over his subjects. All these remarks are not to be found in the officer's speech as we now possess it.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS

TARTUFFE

		After	
TARTUFFE, OR, THE HYPOCRITE		Maurice Leloir	5
TITLE OF 1669		" "	7
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ		" "	40
ORGON, CLEANTE, AND DORINE	Act I, Scene V	" "	41
ORGON AND CLEANTE	Act I, Scene VI	" "	48
MARIANNE, ORGON, AND DORINE	Act II, Scene II	" "	49
VALERE, MARIANNE, AND DORINE	Act II, Scene IV	" "	57
DAMIS, ORGON, AND TARTUFFE	Act III, Scene VI	" "	59
TARTUFFE AND DORINE	Act III, Scene II	" " *Facing*	60
TARTUFFE AND ORGON	Act III, Scene VII	" "	66
ELMIRE, TARTUFFE, AND ORGON (*hidden under the table*)	Act IV, Scene V	" "	67
TARTUFFE, ORGON, AND ELMIRE	Act IV, Scene VII	Edm. Hédouin *Facing*	72
ELMIRE, ORGON, AND TARTUFFE	Act IV, Scene VII	Maurice Leloir	74
M. LOYAL, ORGON, AND HIS FAMILY	Act V, Scene IV	" "	75
THE OFFICER, TARTUFFE, ORGON, AND HIS FAMILY	Act V, Scene IV	" "	82

AMPHITRYON

AMPHITRYON

MAURICE LELOIR, DEL.

IN THE CLOUDS OF OLYMPUS, JUPITER, SEATED ON HIS THRONE AND ACCOMPANIED BY HIS EAGLE, BENDS TOWARD THE GLOBE OF THE EARTH WHERE HE SEES ALCMENA, WHILST CUPID LETS FLY AT HIM AN ARROW OF LOVE. MERCURY, CADUCEUS IN HAND, AND TURNING HIS HEAD TOWARD THE MASTER OF THE GODS, CASTS HIMSELF INTO THE AIR TO DESCEND TO EARTH AND OBEY THE DIVINE COMMAND. THE SIDES OF THE CARTOUCHE, WHICH BEARS THE TITLE OF THE PIECE, END IN FIGURE-HEADS OF YOUNG AND HANDSOME MORTALS IN ECSTASY BEFORE THE GREAT LOVER.

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AMPHITRYON

TITLE OF 1668

MAURICE LELOIR, DEL.

ABOVE, THE EAGLE OF JUPITER, WITH OUTSPREAD WINGS AND HOLDING IN HIS TALONS, IN PLACE OF THE TRADITIONAL THUNDER, THE ARMS OF THE SON OF VENUS; THE CLOUDS UPON WHICH HE RESTS BURST FORTH IN SHOWERS OF CUPID'S ARROWS. ON THE CORNERS OF THE CARTOUCHE BELOW ARE SEATED, TO THE LEFT, CLEANTHIS, ROCKING THE SLEEPING HERCULES, AND TO THE RIGHT, SOSIA, RESTING HIS HEAD ON HIS HAND, AND IN HIS OWN MIND PREFERRING HIS LOT TO THAT OF HIS MASTER. THE CHILD'S CRADLE, RESTING ON A LION'S SKIN, IS RICHLY CARVED; AT THE HEAD, TWO WINGED FEMALE FIGURES, NUDE, HOLDING ABOVE THE CHILD A CROWN, THE REWARD OF HIS LABORS, RECALLED BY THE OXEN OF CACUS, THE TRIPLE-HEADED CERBERUS, THE NEMÆAN LION, THE HYDRA OF LERNE, AND TWO CLUBS CARVED ON THE SIDES OF THE CRADLE. BELOW SOSIA IS HIS LANTERN AND BELOW CLEANTHIS, THE BOX, OPEN AND EMPTY, WHICH HAD CONTAINED THE CLUSTER OF DIAMONDS GAINED FROM PTERELAS BY AMPHITRYON, AND OFFERED BEFOREHAND TO ALCMENA BY JUPITER. AS LATERAL SUPPORTS, TWO COLUMNS, THE FLUTED SHAFTS OF WHICH BEAR THE MILITARY TROPHIES OF THE VICTORY GAINED BY AMPHITRYON, AND SURMOUNTED BY STATUES OF GLORY.

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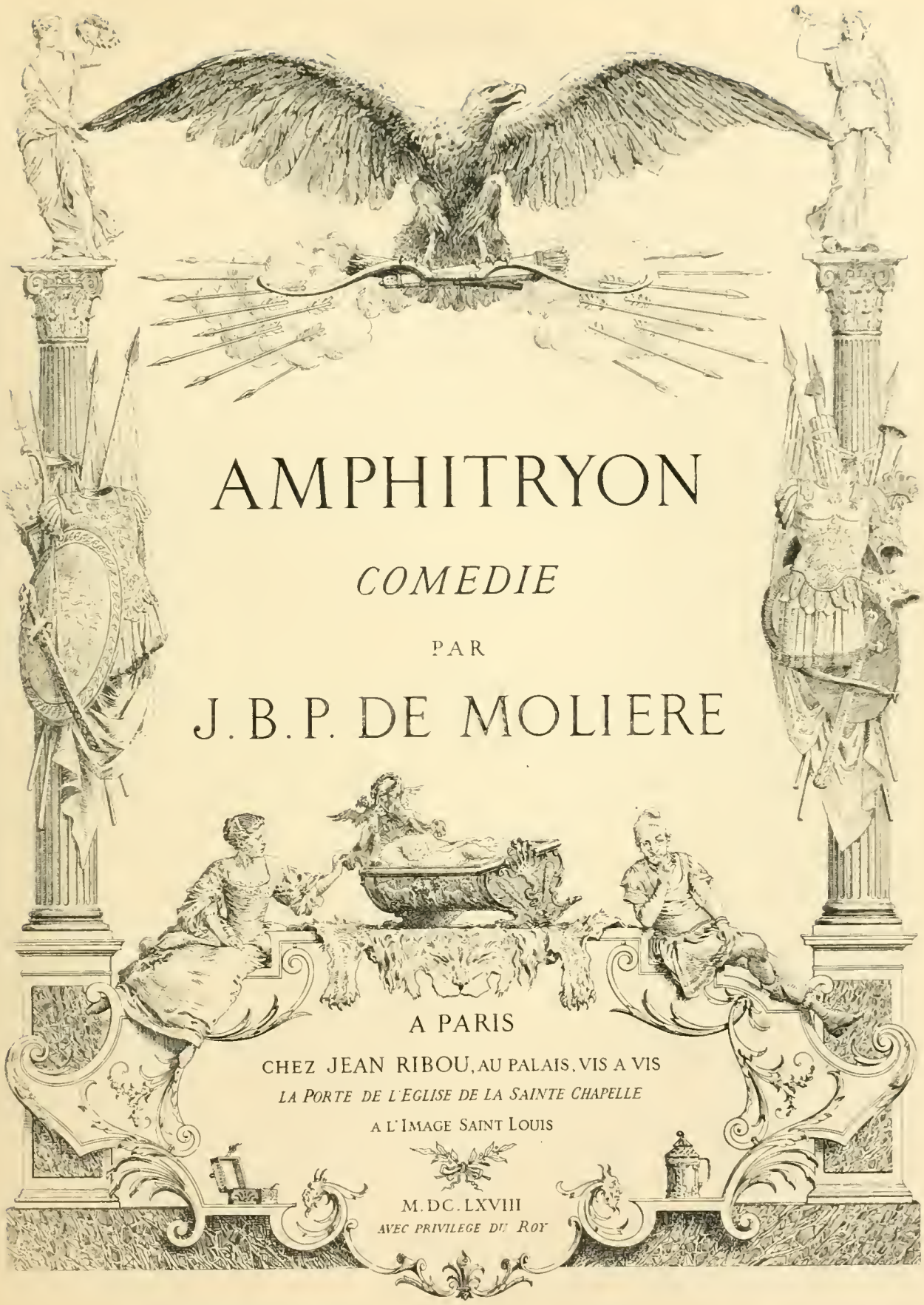

AMPHITRYON
COMEDIE
PAR
J. B. P. DE MOLIERE
A PARIS
CHEZ JEAN RIBOU, AU PALAIS, VIS A VIS
LA PORTE DE L'EGLISE DE LA SAINTE CHAPELLE
A L'IMAGE SAINT LOUIS
M. DC. LXVIII
AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY

Par Grâce et Privilège du Roy, donné à Saint-Germain-en-Laye, le 20. jour de Février 1668, signé *Par le Roy en son Conseil:* MARGERET, il est permis à I. B. P. DE MOLIÈRE de faire imprimer, par tel Libraire ou Imprimeur qu'il voudra, une Pièce de Théâtre, de sa composition, intitulée *L'Amphitryon*, pendant le temps et espace de cinq années, entières et accomplies, à commencer du jour qu'elle sera achevée d'imprimer, et Défenses sont faites à tous autres Libraires et Imprimeurs d'imprimer, ou faire imprimer, vendre et débiter ladite Pièce sans le consentement de l'Exposant, ou de ceux qui auront droict de luy; à peine aux contrevenans de trois mille livres d'amende, confiscation des Exemplaires contrefaits, et de tous despens, dommages et intérests, ainsi que plus au long il est porté par lesdites Lettres de Privilège.

Et ledit Sieur DE MOLIÈRE *a cédé et transporté son droit de Privilège à* JEAN RIBOU, *Marchand libraire à Paris, pour en jouir suivant l'accord fait entr'eux.*

Registré sur le Livre de la Communauté, suivant l'Arrest de la Cour du Parlement.

Achevé d'imprimer pour la première fois le 5 Mars 1668.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

The history of Amphitryon and Alcmena, or rather the myth of the birth of Hercules, is certainly very old, and is to be found in the literature of different nations. The Indians, the Greeks, and the Romans were acquainted with it; and it exists also among the legendary tales of the Middle Ages, but always modified according to the several nationalities where we meet with it, and has sometimes a tragical, sometimes a jocular or ironical, ending.

Voltaire, in his *Historical Fragments about India*, in the twenty-eighth article on *The Terrestrial Paradise of the Indians*, relates how the story of Amphitryon is found amongst the oldest fables of the Brahmins. A certain Brahmin having quarreled with his wife, gave her a beating and left her; an Indian divinity of an inferior rank adopted the appearance of the Brahmin, made his peace with her, and lived for some time with her, until the real husband, who repented of his former behavior, came back again. But the man in possession declared that the other was an impostor, and at last the affair was brought before the Synod of Benares, who ordered an ordeal, which cannot be related. but in which finally the evil-minded divinity betrayed himself, and the lawful husband was reinstated in the matrimonial abode.[1]

Euripides, Epicharmus, and Archippos have also handled this subject, and produced it on the Greek stage; but their plays are lost. Plautus, the father of Roman comedy, has written an *Amphitryo*, which he himself calls in the prologue "Tragico-Comœdia." As Molière owes a great deal of his comedy to his Latin prototype, we cannot do better than give Sir Walter Scott's Introduction to Dryden's remodeling of *Amphitryon*: "Plautus, the venerable father of Roman comedy, who flourished during the second Punic war, left us a play on the subject of Amphitryon, which has had the honor to be deemed worthy of imitation by Molière and Dryden. It cannot be expected that the plain, blunt, and inartificial style of so rude an age should bear any comparison with that of the authors who enjoyed the highest advantages of the polished times to which they were an ornament. But the merit of having devised and embodied most of the comic distresses, which have excited laughter throughout so many ages, is to be attributed to the ancient bard upon whose original conception of the plot his successors have made few and inconsiderable improvements. It is true that, instead

of a formal Prologue who stepped forth in the character of Mercury and gravely detailed to the audience the plot of the play, Molière and Dryden have introduced it in the modern, more artificial method, by the dialogue of the actors in the first scene. It is true, also, that with great contempt of one of the unities, afterward deemed so indispensable by the ancients, Plautus introduces the birth of Hercules into a play, founded upon the intrigue which occasioned the event. Yet with all these disadvantages, and that rude flatness of his dialogue, —resting frequently, for wit, upon the most miserable puns,—the comic device of the two Sosias, the errors into which the malice of Mercury plunges his unlucky original, the quarrel of Alcmena with her real husband, and her reconciliation with Jupiter in his stead, the final confronting of the two Amphitryons, and the astonishment of the unfortunate general at finding every proof of his identity exhibited by his rival, are all, however rudely sketched, the inventions of the Roman poet. In one respect it would seem that the *jeu de théâtre* necessary to render the piece probable upon the stage was better managed in the time of Plautus than in that of Dryden and Molière. Upon a modern stage it is evidently difficult to introduce two pairs of characters so extremely alike as to make it at all probable, or even possible, that the mistakes, depending upon their extreme resemblance, could take place. But, favored by the masks and costume of the ancient theatre, Plautus contrived to render Jupiter and Mercury so exactly like Amphitryon and Sosia, that they were obliged to retain certain marks, supposed to be invisible to the other persons of the drama, by which the audience themselves might be enabled to distinguish the gods from the mortals whose forms they had assumed."

The history of Amphitryon, strangely disguised, is also found in the long series of the romances of the *San-Graal* and of the *Round Table*, and refers to the birth of King Arthur, and not to that of Hercules. In the following manner Robert of Gloucester tells the tale, after Geoffry of Monmouth and Wace:

> "At the fest of Estre the kyng (Uther Pendragon) sende ys sonde,
> That heo comen alle to London the hey men of this londe . . .
> Alle the noble men of this lond to the noble fest come,
> And heore wyves and heore dogtren with hem mony nome,
> This fest was noble ynow, and nobliche y do;
> For mony was the faire ledy, that y come was therto.
> Ygerne, Gorloys wyf, was fairest of echon,
> That was contasse of Cornewail, for so fair nas ther non.
> The kyng by huld hire faste y now, and ys herte on hired caste,
> And thogte, thay heo were wyf, to do folye atte laste."

But she refused to listen to him, and told all to her husband, who, full of anger and "with oute leve of the kyng," went back to his own country. Then Gorloys placed his wife and some of his troops in a very strong fortress, Tintagell, and went himself with a division of his retainers into another fortress of Cornwall. Uther soon made his appearance, and "the castel, that the erl inne was, the king by segede faste." But Ygerne was never out of his thoughts, and "the castel ys so strong that the lady ys inne," that he gave himself up to

the greatest despair. Merlyn, who "was sory ynow for the kynge's folye," was sent for, and by his magic art he gave to Uther the appearance of Gorloys, while he himself, and Ulfyn, the king's confidant, assumed the outward looks of two of the Earl of Cornwall's "men," Brithoel and Jorden. Thus changed, they appear before the castle, where the countess was, and the porter, seeing his lord and his friends, let them in. "The contas was glad y now, tho hire lord to hire com, and eyther other in here armes myd gret joye nom." In the meantime the king's men took the castle where the earl was, Gorloys was slain, and these tidings were brought to Ygerne. The pretended earl told her, however, that he had left his own castle secretly, "that none of myne men yt nuste," and that he was going back to "the kynge, and make my pays with him." He went away and "come toward ys men ys own forme he nom." Afterward King Uther married the noble and widowed countess, but on that night, when he appeared as Gorloys,

> "Bi gete was the beste body, that ever was in this londe,
> Kyng Arthure the noble mon, that ever worthe understonde."

There is a great difference between the Celtic and Classical traditions. Ygerne is not wholly unlike Alcmena; but the comical element is totally wanting in the first, whilst Arthur and Merlyn, although peculiar in their notions of love and morality, are staid and mysterious personages.

Plautus's *Amphitryo* was acted in Latin, in Italy, in the fifteenth century, and in 1560 Lodovico Dolce brought out an imitation of it, under the title of *Il Marito*. But two earlier translations of this play already existed in Spanish; one in prose, done by Francisco de Villalobos, physician to Charles the Fifth, which was published in 1515, and another by Fernando Perez de Oliva, Principal of the University of Salamanca. Camoens, the poet of the Lusiad, produced a piece in imitation of Plautus's comedy, which, according to de Sismondi's *Historical View of the Literature of the South of Europe*, "is executed with considerable wit and spirit." In 1638, Jean de Rotrou published an imitation of the Latin comedy, in French, which he called *The Two Sosias*, and in 1650, only a short time before his death, he remodeled his piece, for the theatre du Marais, as *une grande pièce à machines*, which bore the title of *The Birth of Hercules*. In 1653 there was represented at the court the grand *Ballet of Night*, arranged by Benserade, with machinery by Torelli. The sixth *entrée* of the second *veille* is occupied by a pantomime (*comédie muette*), which is chiefly based on Plautus's plot.

Fifteen years after this pantomime, Molière fixed upon the same subject, and wrote his *Amphitryon*, one of the most charming and natural comedies composed in French verse. But his husband is not the Roman spouse, who is rather proud of having a god for *collaborateur*, nor does his Jupiter, who threatens to kill himself before Alcmena's eyes, give a very correct idea of the classical "father of gods and men." But, on the other hand, his Cleanthis is a happy creation, and the model of a "nagging" but virtuous woman, so fond of using her tongue, that even Mercury, although a god under the disguise of her husband, rather avoids responding to her uxorious advances, and thereby causes an increase of the wrath of the shrew. This greatly enhances the comic interest of the play, and forms an amusing contrast to the

display of conjugal tenderness between Jupiter, the pretended Amphitryon, and the newly-married Alcmena. Sprightliness and vivacity abound in this comedy, which are enhanced by the short and long verses, used whenever suitable, and the alternate rhymes, in which it is written.

It has been said that Molière, in producing his *Amphitryon*, wished to flatter the nascent passion of Louis XIV. for Madam de Montespan, but this accusation seems to me absolutely without foundation. This play was represented on the 13th of January, 1668; and it was only some months later that this high-born lady became the recognized mistress of the king, who would not have permitted any allusions to be made to his amours. Moreover, *Amphitryon* was not represented at court, but at the theatre of the Palais Royal, so that the allusions—if any existed—must have appeared to the Parisian public, at all times inclined to be satirical, as far from complimentary. In any case the comedy was very successful, and was represented twenty-nine consecutive times.

Amphitryon was dedicated to the Prince de Condé in the following words:

My Lord,

Under favor of the Wits, I know nothing more impertinent than Dedications; and Your most serene Highness will give me leave not to follow here the style of those gentlemen, and to omit using two or three miserable thoughts, which have been turned and re-turned so often, that they are worn threadbare. The name of the Great *Condé* is too glorious a name to be treated like other names. That illustrious name must be applied to no uses unworthy of it; and were I to say fine things, I would rather talk of putting it at the head of an army, than at the head of a book; and I should much better conceive what it is able to do, by opposing it to the forces of the enemies of the state, than by opposing it to the criticism of the enemies of a play.

Not but that your sereoe highness's approbation is a powerful protection for all these kind of works, and that people are persuaded of your knowledge, as well as of your intrepid courage and your greatness of soul. It is known throughout the whole world, that your merit is not circumscribed by the bounds of that unconquerable valor which gains adorers even amongst those whom it vanquishes; that that merit extends even to the nicest and sublimest sciences; and that your decisions concerning intellectual works never fail to be assented to even by the most fastidious. But it is likewise known, my lord, that all those glorious approbations which we boast of to the public cost us nothing to print, and that they are things which we dispose of at pleasure. It is known, I say, that an epistle dedicatory says what it pleases, and that an author has it in his power to lay hold of the most august persons, and to adorn the first leaves of his book with their great names; that he has the liberty herein to give himself the honor of their esteem as much as he will, and to make to himself protectors who never had the least thoughts of being so.

I shall neither abuse your name nor your goodness, my lord, to oppugn the critics of *Amphitryon*, and to assume a glory which perhaps I have not deserved; and I take the liberty of offering you my play, only to have the opportunity of letting you know that I incessantly regard you with profound veneration, the great qualities which you join to the august blood from which you descend, and that I am, my lord, with all possible respect and imaginable zeal, your most serene Highness's very humble, very obedient, and very obliging servant,

MOLIÈRE.

In the seventh volume of the translated *Select Comedies of M. de Molière*, London, 1732, this play is dedicated to the Right Honorable George Dodington, Esq., in the following words:

SIR:—You are so generally known to be an Encourager of Literature, that every Professor of it, from the highest to the lowest, considers you as his Friend; and grows ambitious of paying his best Respects to one

whose Genius, Learning, Politeness, Candor, Benevolence, and Love of the Muses are so eminently remarkable. Give me leave therefore to lay before you a Translation of MOLIÈRE's *Amphitryon:* the Fruits of my leisure Hours. And as the Rhyme and Measure of the Verses in the *Original* make it difficult to be render'd literally into *English Prose*, be so good as to excuse such Passages as your Judgment cannot approve.

Most Writers would launch out on this occasion, and elaborately draw a Character which, however pleasing it might prove to others, would, I am confident, be disagreeable to you.—But, for my part, I shall only add, that whatsoever Motives *Dedications* usually proceed from, the sole Intent of this is to assure you and all the World, that I am, with great esteem, SIR, *Your most Obedient Humble Servant,*

THE TRANSLATOR.

John Dryden, in his *Amphitryon*, performed in 1690, has borrowed both from Plautus and Molière: "But," says Sir Walter Scott, "the wretched taste of the age has induced him to lard the piece with gratuitous indelicacy. He is, in general, coarse and vulgar, where Molière is witty; and where the Frenchman ventures upon a double meaning, the Englishman always contrives to make it a single one. Yet, although inferior to Molière, and accommodated to the gross taste of the seventeenth century, *Amphitryon* is one of the happiest effusions of Dryden's comic muse. He enriches the plot by the intrigue of Mercury and Phædra; and the petulant interested "Queen of Gipsies," as her lover terms her, is a bad paramour for the God of Thieves. In the scenes of a higher cast Dryden far outstrips both the French and Roman poets. The sensation to be expressed is not that of sentimental affection, which the good father of Olympus was not capable of feeling; but love of that grosser and subordinate kind, which prompted Jupiter in his intrigues, has been by none of the ancient poets expressed in more beautiful verse than that in which Dryden has clothed it, in the scenes between Jupiter and Alcmena."

Dr. Hawkesworth remodeled and castrated Dryden's *Amphitryon*, in which altered form it was acted at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane and Covent Garden. "Dryden's comedy," says the Doctor, "is so tainted with the profaneness and immodesty of the times in which he wrote, that the present time, however selfish and corrupt, has too much regard to external decorum to permit the representation of it upon the stage, without drawing a veil, at least, over some parts of its deformity." It is further stated, in the preface to Dr. Hawkesworth's alteration: "In the scene between Sosia and Mercury, in the second act, Amphitryon is supposed to have sent a buckle of diamonds by Sosia as a present to Alcmena; for Sosia first asks Mercury if *Amphitryon did send a certain servant with a present to his wife;* and soon after asks him, 'What that present was;' which, by Mercury's answer, appears to be the diamond buckle. Yet in the scene between Amphitryon and Alcmena in the third act, when Alcmena asks him, as a proof of having been with her before, from whose hands she had the jewel, he cries out, 'This is amazing; have I already given you those diamonds? *the present I reserved . . .*' And instead of supposing that Sosia had delivered them as part of his errand, which he pretended he could not execute, he appeals to him for their being in safe custody, reserved to be presented by himself. This is an inconsistency peculiar to Dryden, for neither Plautus nor Molière anywhere mention the present to have been sent by Sosia. There is another inaccuracy of the same kind which occurs both in Plautus and Molière. It

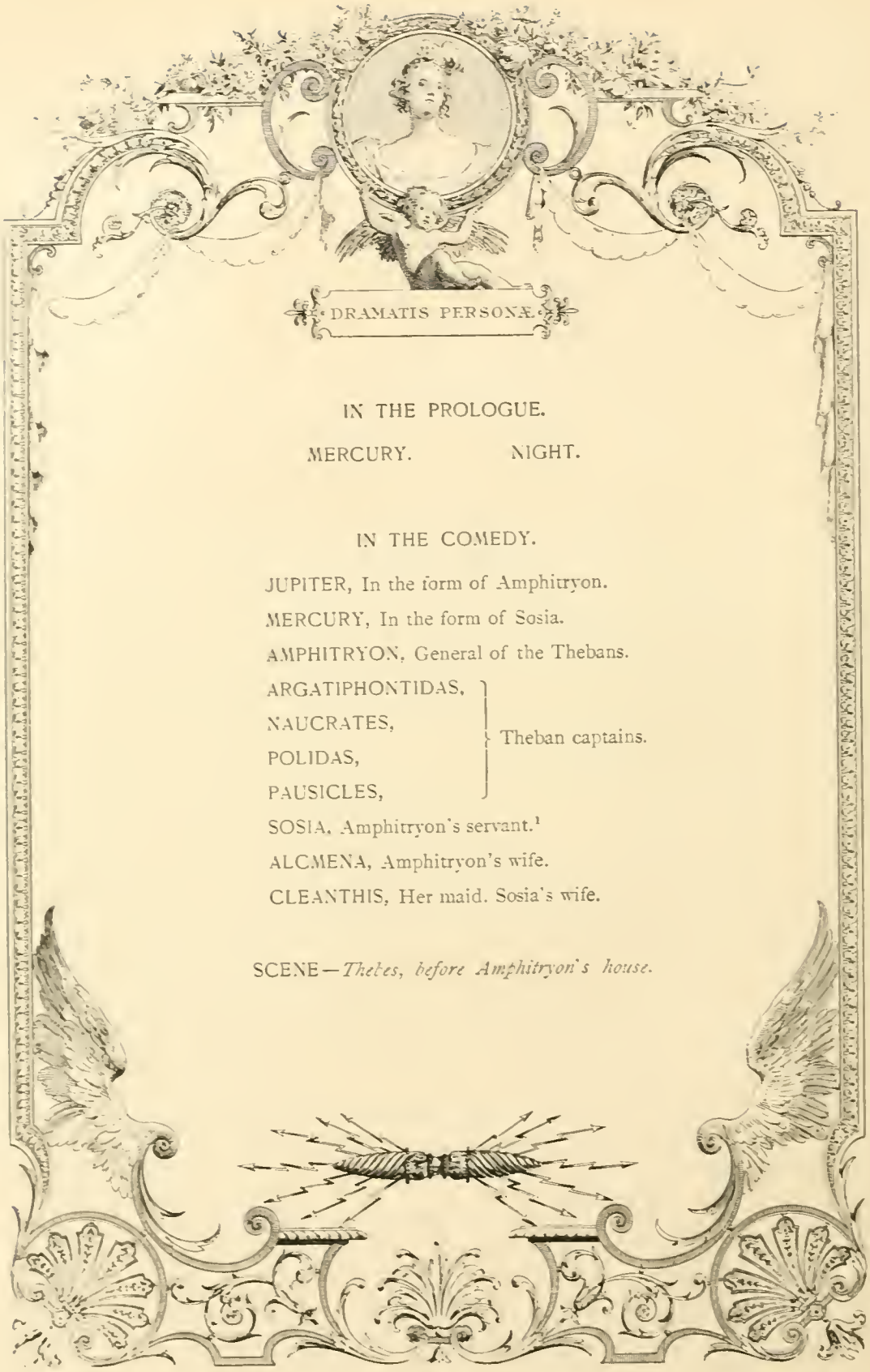
appears, in the second scene of the second act, that one part of Sosia's errand was to give Alcmena a particular account of the battle; and Sosia's account of his being prevented is so extravagant and absurd that Amphitryon cannot believe it; yet, when Alcmena, in the third scene, asks Amphitryon how she came to know *what he had sent Sosia to tell her*, Amphitryon, in astonishment, seems to admit that she could know these particulars *only from himself*, and does not consider her questions as a proof that Sosia had indeed delivered his message, though, for some reasons, he had pretended the contrary, and forged an incredible story to account for his neglect. As it would have been so much more natural for Amphitryon to have supposed that Sosia had told him a lie, than that Alcmena had by a miracle learned what only he and Sosia could tell her, without seeing either of them; this inaccuracy is removed by introducing such a supposition, and making the dialogue correspond with it. In the second act, Jupiter, in the character of Amphitryon, leaves Alcmena with much reluctance, pretending haste to return to the camp, and great solicitude to keep his visit to her a secret from Thebans; yet when he appears again in the third act, which he knew would be taken for the third appearance of Amphitryon, he does not account for his supposed second appearance at the return of the real Amphitryon, just after his departure, which seems to be absolutely necessary to maintain his borrowed character consistently; and without dropping the least hint of his being no longer solicitous to conceal his excursion from the camp, he sends Sosia to invite several of the citizens to dinner. Many other inaccuracies less considerable and less apparent have been removed, which it is not necessary to point out: whoever shall think it worth while diligently to compare the play as it stood, with the altered copy, can scarce fail to see the reason of the alterations as they occur. It must be confessed that there are still many things in Amphitryon, which, though I did not obliterate, I would not have written; but I think none of these are exceptionable in a moral view." Let us add to this, that the doctor altered also some of Dryden's songs, and substituted others which are very flat. In the prologue he says:

> "The scenes which Plautus drew to-night we shew,
> Touched by Molière, by Dryden taught to glow.
> Dryden!—in evil day his genius rose,
> When wit and decency were constant foes:
> Wit then defiled in manners and in mind,
> Whene'er he sought to please, disgrac'd mankind,
> Freed from his faults, we bring him to the fair."

A German litérateur, Heinrich von Kleist (1776–1811) has also written an *Amphitryon*, in which he freely imitates Molière. The great difference is in the conversation between Jupiter, as Amphitryon, and Alcmena, which in the German author is full of a certain kind of mystic sentimentality, and in which Jove, disguised as Amphitryon, informs her that the real Amphitryon, who has visited her, is the father of gods and men.

NOTE

[1] Moland and several other commentators of Molière say that Voltaire found this Indian legend in Colonel Dow's book. I have looked in Voltaire; but he does not say so, nor can I find it in Dow's *Inaijat Allah*—tales translated from the Persian—nor in his *History of Hindostan.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PROLOGUE.

MERCURY. NIGHT.

IN THE COMEDY.

JUPITER, In the form of Amphitryon.

MERCURY, In the form of Sosia.

AMPHITRYON, General of the Thebans.

ARGATIPHONTIDAS, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, } Theban captains.

SOSIA, Amphitryon's servant.[1]

ALCMENA, Amphitryon's wife.

CLEANTHIS, Her maid. Sosia's wife.

SCENE—*Thebes, before Amphitryon's house.*

PROLOGUE

MERCURY (*in a hurry*). Never (*it can't*) *cleave the air by two hours*.

MERC. Gentle choristers, I must stay a while. Some help is wanted of you, and I have two words to say to you from Jupiter.

NIGHT. What, Mercury, will you not stay? We would have thought of you.

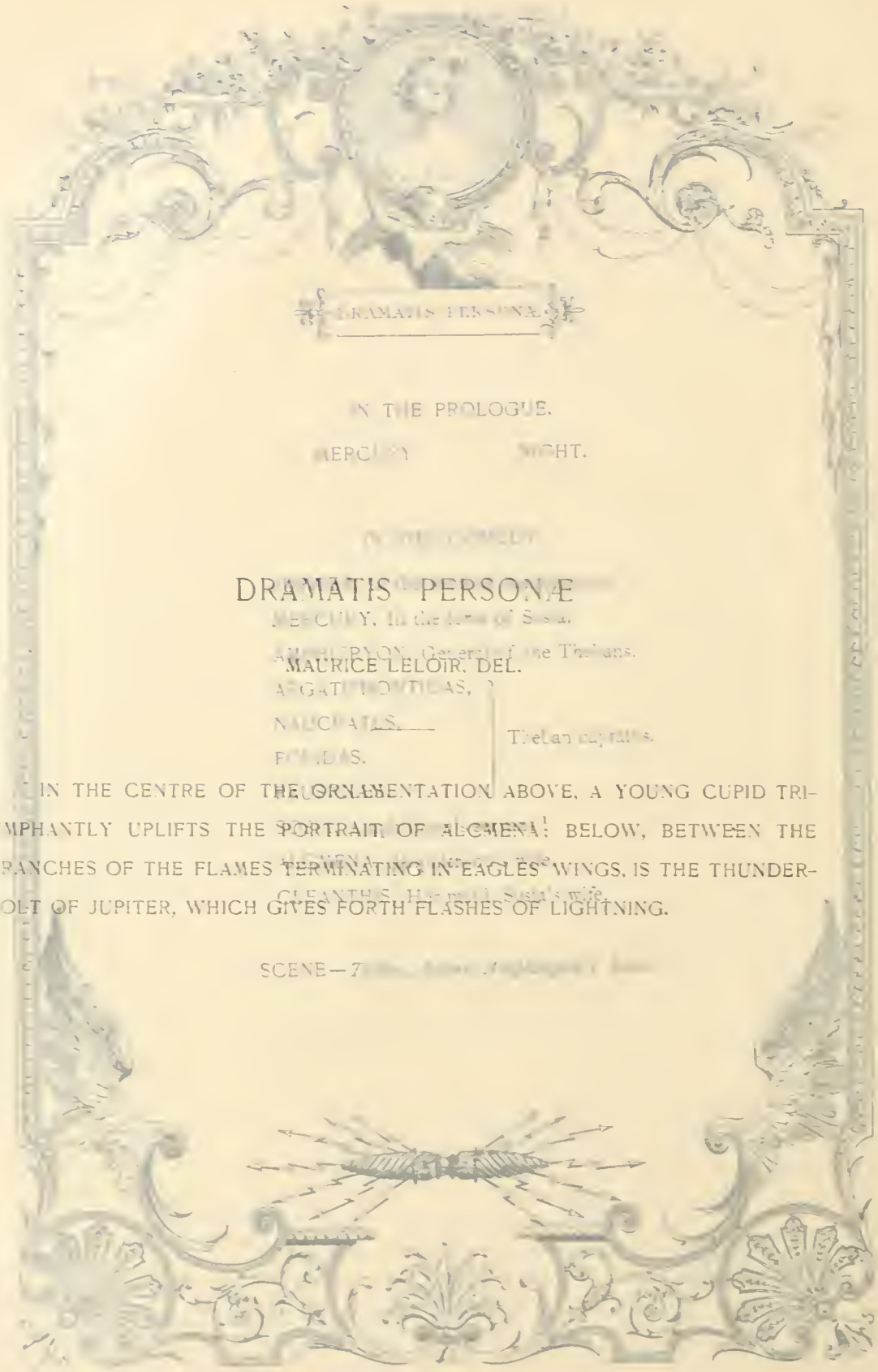
MERC. Upon my word, getting tired and not being able to fulfill the different duties which Jupiter lays upon me, I quietly sat down on this cloud to await your coming.

NIGHT. You are jesting, Mercury; and you do not mean it. Should some the gods to pay a fine, are you?

MERC. Are the gods caught of you?

NIGHT. I very gay, but I am not to preserve continually the same countenance. There are certain trifles, such as which Jove's sublime attributes, which should be left to men, because they are undignified.

MERC. Does not the gods speak to you? Do you have the courage to deny, twice? Do not [illegible] and I [illegible] ing, by an [illegible] to which they want to keep up the [illegible] for his behoof, [illegible] and have [illegible] go in [illegible] I [illegible] the [illegible] the gods to the [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] of all the [illegible] [illegible] The gods [illegible] the first stupidity which [illegible] gentlemen commit.



IN THE CENTRE OF THE ORNAMENTATION ABOVE, A YOUNG CUPID TRIUMPHANTLY UPLIFTS THE PORTRAIT OF ALCMENA; BELOW, BETWEEN THE BRANCHES OF THE FLAMES TERMINATING IN EAGLES' WINGS, IS THE THUNDERBOLT OF JUPITER, WHICH GIVES FORTH FLASHES OF LIGHTNING.

PROLOGUE

MERCURY (*on a cloud*), NIGHT (*drawn through the air by two horses*).

MERC. Gently! charming Night, deign to stay awhile. Some help is wanted of you; and I have two words to say to you from Jupiter.

NIGHT. Ah! it is you, Sir Mercury! who would have thought of you in such a position?

MERC. Upon my word, getting tired, and not being able to fulfill the different duties which Jupiter lays upon me, I quietly sat down on this cloud to await your coming.

NIGHT. You are jesting, Mercury; and you do not mean it; does it become the gods to say that they are tired?

MERC. Are the gods made of iron?

NIGHT. I wot not; but it is meet to preserve continually the divine decorum. There are certain words the use of which lowers this sublime attribute, and which should be left to men, because they are undignified.

MERC. How easily you speak of it; and you have, fair charmer, a chariot, in which, like a careless great lady, you are drawn by two good horses wherever you like. But it is not the same thing with me, and I cannot, in my fatal destiny, bear the poets too great a grudge, for their extreme impertinence, in having, by an unjust law, of which they wish to keep up the custom, given to each god, for his behoof, a special conveyance, and have left me to go on foot, me, like a village messenger; I, who, as is well known, am the famous messenger of the sovereign of the gods, in the skies and on the earth; and who, without exaggerating anything, stand more than any one else in need of the means of traveling about, on account of all the duties which he lays upon me.

NIGHT. How can you help it? The poets do as they like. It is not the first stupidity which we have seen these gentlemen commit.

But at any rate, your irritation against them is unreasonable, for the wings at your feet are due to their care.

MERC. Yes; but does one tire one's self less in going more quickly?

NIGHT. Let us leave this, Sir Mercury, and come to the point.

MERC. It is Jupiter, as I have told you, who wishes the sombre favor of your cloak for a certain gallant adventure, with which a new love affair provides him. His tactics are not new to you, I believe: he very often neglects the skies for the earth; and you are not ignorant that this master of the gods is fond of becoming humanized for mortal beauties, and has a hundred ingenious tricks to vanquish the most cruel. He has felt the darts of Alcmena's eyes; and whilst Amphitryon, her husband, commands the Theban troops on Bœotia's plains, he has assumed his form, and under that disguise relieves his pains, in the possession of the sweetest pleasures. The condition of the wedded pair is propitious to his flame; Hymen has united them only a few days since; and the still young fire of their tender love has made Jupiter have recourse to this pretty artifice. In this case his stratagem has proved successful; but with many a cherished object a similar disguise would be of no use, and to assume the form of a husband is not everywhere a good means of pleasing.

NIGHT. I admire Jupiter, and I cannot conceive all the disguises that come into his head.

MERC. In this way, he wishes to have a taste of all sorts of conditions; and it is not at all acting as a stupid god. From whatever point of view he may be regarded by mortals, I would think very little of him if he never abandoned his redoubtable mien, and were always full of affectation, in the highest part of heaven. In my opinion, there can be nothing more foolish than to be always imprisoned in one's grandeur; and, above all, a lofty rank becomes very inconvenient in the transports of amorous ardor. Jupiter, who, no doubt, is a good judge of pleasure, knows how to descend from the height of his supreme glory; and, to enter into everything that pleases him, he leaves his individuality behind him, and it is no longer Jupiter who appears.

NIGHT. One might yet overlook seeing him descend from his sublime estate to enter into that of men, to enjoy all the transports of which their hearts are capable, and to accommodate himself to their jests, if, in the changes to which his disposition drives him, he would confine himself to human nature. But to see Jupiter as a bull, a serpent, a swan, or anything else, I do not think it nice, and am not at all astonished that it is sometimes talked about.

MERC. Let all the cavilers talk: such changes have a charm which surpasses their understanding. This god knows well enough what he is about there as elsewhere: and that, in the movements of their tender passions, the brutes are not so stupid as one would think.

NIGHT. Let us return to the fair one whose favors he enjoys. If, by his stratagem, he finds that his passion is successful, what more can he wish, and what can I do?

MERC. That, to satisfy the desires of his enamored soul, you should slacken the pace of your horses, to make of so delightful a night, the longest night of all; that you should allow more time to his transports, and that you should retard the break of day which must hasten the return of him whose place he takes.

NIGHT. This is no doubt a nice employment, which the great Jupiter reserves for me! And an honorable name is given to the service required of me!

PROLOGUE

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

THE SCENE OF THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN NIGHT AND MERCURY. THE LATTER COMES TO ASK IN JUPITER'S NAME THAT THE NIGHT MAY BE PROLONGED SO THAT UNDER THE GUISE OF AMPHITRYON HE MAY THE LONGER ENJOY THE COMPANY OF ALCMENA. AFTER SOME DEMURRING ON THE PART OF NIGHT, MERCURY REPROACHES HER WITH BEING "RATHER OLD-FASHIONED FOR SO YOUNG A GODDESS," AND STATES THAT "IN THE WORLD YOU HAVE THE REPUTATION OF NOT BEING SO PARTICULAR." NIGHT CONCLUDES THAT JUPITER MAY AS WELL HAVE HIS WISHES GRANTED.

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MERC. You are rather old-fashioned for so young a goddess! Such an employment has nothing degrading except among people of low birth. When one has the happiness of being in a lofty rank, whatever is done is always well and good; and things change their names according to what one may be.

NIGHT. You know more about such matters than I do; and I shall believe in your superior knowledge, and accept this employment.

MERC. Now, now, Madame Night, a little gently, I pray. In the world you have the reputation of not being so particular. In a hundred different climates you are made the confidant of many gallant adventures; and, to tell you my mind plainly, I believe that we have nothing with which to reproach each other.

NIGHT. Let us drop these bickerings, and remain what we are. Let us not give mankind cause to laugh by telling each other the truth.

MERC. Farewell. I am going yonder on this business, promptly to doff the form of Mercury, to don the figure of Amphitryon's servant.

NIGHT. I am going to make a stay in this hemisphere with my dark train.

MERC. Good-day, Night.

NIGHT. Farewell, Mercury.[3]

(*Mercury descends from his cloud; Night crosses the stage.*)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Sosia (*Alone*).

Who goes there? Eh? My fear increases at every step! Gentlemen, I am a friend to everyone. Ah! what extraordinary boldness to be abroad at such an hour as this! What a scurvy trick my master, covered as he is with glory, plays me here! What! would he have me set out in such a dark night if he had any love for his fellow-man? Could he not as well have waited till daylight, to send me to announce his return and the details of his victory? To what slavery is thy life subjected, Sosia! Our lot is much harder with the great than with the little. They will have it that everything in nature be compelled to be sacrificed to them. Night and day, hail, wind, danger, heat, cold, the moment they speak we must fly. Twenty long years of hard services avail us nothing with them. The slightest whim draws down their anger upon us. In spite of all this, our foolish hearts cling to the empty honor of remaining with them, and will be contented with the false notion, which all other people share, that we are happy.[3] In vain, reason calls us to retire; in vain, our spite sometimes consents to this; their presence has too powerful an influence on our zeal, and the slightest favor of a caressing look re-engages us more firmly than ever. But at last, I perceive our house through the darkness, and my fear vanishes.[4] I must have some set speech for my mission. I owe to Alcmena some military sketch of the great battle which sent all our enemies to the

right-about. But how the deuce am I to describe it, when I was not there? No matter, let us speak of cut and thrust, as if I had been eye-witness. How many people tell of battles from which they kept far enough away! In order to act my part with credit, I will rehearse it a little. This is supposed to be the room in which I enter as the bearer of dispatches; and this lantern is Alcmena, whom I have to address.[5] (*He sets his lantern on the ground and addresses his speech to it.*) Madam, Amphitryon, my master and your husband . . . (Good! that is a nice beginning!), whose thoughts are ever filled with your charms, has been pleased to choose me from amongst all to give you tidings of the success of his arms, and of his desire to be with you. "Ah! really, my good Sosia, I am heartily delighted to see you back again." Madam, you do me too much honor, and my lot is to be envied. (Well answered!) "How fares Amphitryon?" Madam, as a man of courage should, whenever an occasion offers for behaving with glory. (Capital! that is well conceived!) "When will he, by his charming return, satisfy my heart?" As quickly as he can, assuredly, madam, but much less early than his heart desires. (Ah!) "But in what state has the war left him? What says he? What does he? Set my heart at rest." He says far less than he does, madam, and makes his enemies tremble. (Plague! where do I get all these pretty speeches?) "What are the rebels doing? tell me, what is their present condition?" They could make no stand against us, madam; we cut them to pieces, put their chief, Pterelas,[6] to death, took Telebos[7] by storm; and the whole port rings already with our prowess. "Ah! what success! ye gods! Who could ever have thought it? Tell me, Sosia, how it all occurred." Willingly, madam; and without boasting. I can give you, very accurately, the details of this victory. Imagine, then, madam, that Telebos is on this side. (*Sosia marks the places on his hand or on the ground.*) It is a city really almost as large as Thebes. The river is, as it were, there. Our people encamped here; and that space here was occupied by our enemies. On a height, somewhere thereabout, was their infantry; and a little lower down, toward the right, their cavalry. After having addressed our prayers to the gods, and issued every order, the signal was given. The enemy, thinking to cut out work for us, divided their horse into three platoons; but we soon cooled their courage, and you shall see how. There, is our vanguard eager to be at work; there, stood the archers of our king, Creon; and here, was the main body of the army (*some noise from within*), which was about to . . . Stay, the main body of the army is afraid; I hear some noise, methinks.[8]

SCENE II.—MERCURY, SOSIA.

MERC. (*In the form of Sosia, coming out of Amphitryon's house.*) Under this guise which resembles him, let us drive away this babbler, whose unfortunate arrival might disturb the happiness which our lovers are enjoying together.

SOS. (*Not seeing Mercury.*) My spirits revive a little, and after all, I think it was nothing. For fear of a sinister adventure, however, let us go and finish the conversation indoors.

MERC. (*Aside.*) Unless you be stronger than Mercury, I shall prevent your doing so.

Sos. (*Without seeing Mercury.*) This night seems to me inordinately long. Judging by the time I have been on the way, my master must have mistaken evening for morning, or fair Phœbus lies too long in bed through having taken too much wine.

Merc. (*Aside.*) With what irreverence this lout speaks of the gods! My arm shall just now chastise well this insolence; and I shall have some real fun with him by stealing his name as well as his likeness.

Sos. (*Perceiving Mercury a little way off.*) Ah! upon my word, I was right after all: it is all over with me, poor wretch! I perceive, before our house, a man, whose mien bodes me no good. To appear easy, I shall hum a little.[9] (*He sings.*)

Merc. What fellow is this, who takes the liberty to sing and to deafen me in this manner? (*As Mercury speaks Sosia's voice grows gradually weaker.*) Does he wish me to give him a drubbing?

Sos. (*Aside.*) Assuredly that fellow has no love for music.[10]

Merc. For the last week I have found no one whose bones I could break; my arm loses its strength in this idleness, and I am looking out for some back to regain my cunning.

Sos. (*Aside.*) What the deuce of a fellow is this? My heart is big with mortal fear. But why should I tremble so? Perhaps the fellow is just as much afraid as I am, and speaks in that way to hide his fear underneath a pretended audacity. Yes, yes, let us not allow him to think us a goose. If I am not bold, let me try to appear so. Let us reason ourselves into courage; he is alone like me; I am strong, I have a good master, and there is our house.

Merc. Who goes there?

Sos. I.

Merc. Who, I?

Sos. I. (*Aside.*) Courage, Sosia.

Merc. What is your condition in life, tell me?

Sos. To be a man, and to speak.

Merc. Are you master or servant?

Sos. As the whim takes me.

Merc. Whither are your steps bent?

Sos. Where I intend to go.

Merc. Ah! this displeases me.

Sos. I am delighted to hear it.

Merc. Positively, by fair means or foul, I shall know from you, wretch, what you are doing, where you came from before daybreak, whither you are going, and who you may be.

Sos. I do good and ill by turns; I come hence; I go thither; I belong to my master.[11]

Merc. You show some wit, and you have a mind, I perceive, to assume with me the man of importance. I feel inclined to make acquaintance, to give you a box on the ear with my own hand.

Sos. To me?

Merc. To you; and there it is for you, to make sure of it. (*Mercury slaps Sosia's face.*)

Sos. Ho, ho! this is in earnest?

Merc. No, it is only for fun, and in answer to your jokes.

Sos. Zounds! friend, how you deal your blows about without one's saying anything to you.

Merc. These are the least of my blows—my little ordinary boxes on the ear.

Sos. Were I as hasty as you, we should make nice work of it.

Merc. All this is nothing as yet. We shall see something better anon; but to provide a little interval, let us continue our conversation.

Sos. I give up the game. (*Wishes to go.*)

MERC. (*Stopping him.*) Where are you going?

SOS. What does it matter to you?

MERC. I wish to know where you are going.

SOS. To get that door opened to me. Why do you detain me?

MERC. If you are impudent enough to go only near it, I shall shower down a storm of blows upon you.

SOS. What! you wish, by your threats, to prevent my entering our own house?

MERC. How! our house?

SOS. Yes, our house.

MERC. O, the wretch! you belong to that house, you say?

SOS. Indeed, I do. Is not Amphitryon the master of it?

MERC. Well, what does that prove?

SOS. I am his servant.

MERC. You?

SOS. I.

MERC. His servant?

SOS. Without a doubt.

MERC. The servant of Amphitryon?

SOS. Of Amphitryon, of him.

MERC. Your name is . . .?

SOS. Sosia.

MERC. Eh! what?

SOS. Sosia.

MERC. Harkee! do you know that, with my fist, I shall knock you down on the spot?

SOS. For what? What fury seizes you?

MERC. Tell me, who made you so rash as to assume the name of Sosia?

SOS. I! I do not assume it; I have had it all my life.

MERC. O, what a horrible lie, and what extreme impudence! You dare to maintain that Sosia is your name?

SOS. Indeed, I do; I maintain it, for the very good reason that the gods have so ordained it by their supreme decree, and that it lies not in my power to say nay, and to be any other than myself.

MERC. A thousand cudgel-strokes ought to be the reward of such effrontery.

SOS. (*Beaten by Mercury.*) Justice, citizens! Help, I beseech you!

MERC. How, you hang-dog, you cry out!

SOS. You kill me with a thousand blows, and you do not wish me to cry out?

MERC. It is thus that my arm . . .

SOS. It is an unworthy action. You take advantage of the superiority which my want of courage gives you over me; and that is not fair. It is mere hectoring to wish to profit by the poltroonery of those whom we thrash. To beat a man who we know will not fight, is not a generous action; and to show courage against those who have none, is blamable.

MERC. Well! are you Sosia now? what say you?

SOS. Your blows have effected no metamorphosis in me; and all the change that I can find in the case is that I am Sosia beaten.

MERC. (*Threatening Sosia.*) Again! A hundred fresh blows for this new impudence.

SOS. Pray, cease your blows.

MERC. Then cease your insolence.

SOS. Anything you please; I keep silence. The dispute is too unequal between us.

MERC. Are you Sosia still? say, wretch?

SOS. Alas! I am what you please: dispose of my fate entirely according to your wish; your arm has made you master of it.

MERC. Your name was Sosia, by what you said?

SOS. It is true, until now I thought the thing plain enough; but your stick has made me see that I was mistaken in the matter.

MERC. It is I who am Sosia, and all Thebes confesses it: Amphitryon has never had any other than me.

Sos. You, Sosia?

Merc. Yes, Sosia! and if anyone plays tricks with him, let him look to himself.

Sos. (*Aside.*) Heaven! must I thus renounce my own self, and see my name stolen from me by an impostor. How extremely fortunate it is for him that I am a coward, or else, 'sdeath! . . .

Merc. You are murmuring, I know not what, between your teeth.

Sos. No. But, in the name of the gods, give me leave to speak for one moment to you.

Merc. Speak.

Sos. But promise me, I pray, that there shall be no blows. Let us sign a truce.[12]

Merc. Proceed: go on, I grant you that point.

Sos. Who, tell me, put this fancy into your head? What good will it do you to take my name away from me? And, even were you a demon, could you, in short, prevent me from being myself, from being Sosia?

Merc. (*Lifting his stick.*) How! Can you . . .

Sos. Ah! hold; we have discarded blows.

Merc. What! hang-dog, impostor, rascal! . . .

Sos. As for names, call me as many as you like; these are slight wounds, and I am not angry at them.

Merc. You say you are Sosia?

Sos. Yes. Some nonsensical tale has been . . .

Merc. Now then, I break our truce, and take back my word.

Sos. No matter. I cannot annihilate myself for you, and stand a speech so very improbable. Is it in your power to be what I am? and can I cease to be myself? Did anyone ever hear of such a thing? And can one give the lie to a hundred convincing proofs? Do I dream? Am I asleep? Is my mind disturbed by some powerful transport? Do I not plainly feel that I am awake? Am I not in my right senses? Has not my master, Amphitryon, charged me to come hither to Alcmena, his wife? Am I not to extol his love for her, and to give an account of his deeds against our enemies? Have I not just come from the harbor? Have I not a lantern in my hand? Have I not found you in front of our dwelling? Did I not talk to you in a perfectly kind manner? Do you not take an advantage of my cowardice, to hinder me from entering our house? Have you not spent your rage upon my back? Have you not belabored me with blows? Ah! all this is but too real; and would to Heaven it were less so! Cease, therefore, to insult a wretch's lot; and leave me to acquit myself of the calls of my duty.

Merc. Stop, or the least step brings down upon your back a thundering outbreak of my just wrath. All that you have mentioned just now is mine, except the blows.

Sos. This lantern knows how, my heart full of fear, I departed this morning from the vessel. Has not Amphitryon sent me to Alcmena, his wife, from the camp?

Merc. You have told a lie. It was I whom Amphitryon deputed to Alcmena, and who, at this moment, arrives from the Persian Port;[13] I, who come to announce the valor of his arm which gained us a complete victory, and slew the chief of our enemies. In short, it is I who assuredly am Sosia, son of Davus, an honest shepherd; brother to Harpage who died in a foreign country; husband to that prude Cleanthis, whose

temper drives me mad; who has received a thousand lashes at Thebes, without ever saying aught about it; and who was formerly publicly marked on the back, for being too honest a man.[14]

Sos. (*Quietly, aside.*) He is right. Unless one be Sosia, one cannot know all he says; and amidst the astonishment which seizes upon me, I begin, in my turn, to believe him a little. In fact, now that I look at him, I perceive that he has my figure, my face, my gestures. Let me ask him some question, in order to clear up this mystery. (*Aloud.*) What did Amphitryon obtain for his share of all the plunder taken from our enemies?

Merc. Five very large diamonds, neatly set in a cluster, with which their chief used to adorn himself as a rare piece of workmanship.[15]

Sos. For whom does he intend such a rich present?

Merc. For his wife: and he wishes her to wear them.

Sos. But where is it placed at present until it shall be brought?

Merc. In a casket sealed with the arms of my master.[16]

Sos. (*Aside.*) He does not tell a single lie in any of his answers; and I begin really to be in doubt about myself. With me he is already, by sheer force, Sosia; and he might perhaps also be he by reason. And yet when I touch myself and recollect, it seems to me that I am myself. Where shall I find some trustworthy light to clear up what I see? What I have done alone, and what no one has seen, cannot be known unless by myself. By that question, I must astonish him; and that is enough to puzzle him, and we shall see. (*Aloud.*) When they were fighting, what did you do in our tents; whither you ran alone to hide yourself?

Merc. From off a ham . . .

Sos. (*Quietly, aside.*) That is it!

Merc. Which I unearthed, I bravely cut two juicy slices, with which I stuffed myself nicely. And adding thereto a wine of which they are very chary, and the sight of which pleased me even before I tasted it, I imbibed some courage for our people who were fighting.

Sos. (*Softly, aside.*) This matchless proof concludes well in his favor; and, unless he were in the bottle, nothing is to be said against it.[17] (*Aloud.*) From the proofs laid before me, I cannot deny that you are Sosia, and I acknowledge it. But, if you are he, tell me whom you wish me to be; for, after all, I must be somebody.

Merc. When I shall be no longer Sosia, you may be he; I agree to that; but while I am he, it will be your death to take such a fancy into your head.

Sos. All this confusion sets my wit on edge, and reason is contrary to what one sees. But there must be an end to this somehow or other; and the shortest way for me is to go in there.

Merc. Ah! you hangdog, you, with another taste of the stick!

Sos. (*Beaten by Mercury.*) Ah! what is this? Great gods! he strikes harder still; and my back will be sore for a month to come. Let me leave this devil of a fellow, and return to the harbor. Oh, just heavens, I have made a pretty embassy!

Merc. (*Alone.*) At last I have made him fly; and, by this treatment, he has got his punishment for many of his deeds. But I perceive Jupiter, who very politely escorts the amorous Alcmena.

SCENE III.—JUPITER (*under the form of Amphitryon*), ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

JUP. Forbid, dear Alcmena, the torch-bearers to approach. They afford me delight in beholding you; but might betray my coming hither, which had best remain concealed. My love, restrained by all these weighty cares with which the glory of our arms held me fettered, has stolen the moments which it has just given to your charms from the duties of my post. This theft, which my heart devoted to your beauty, might be blamed by the public voice; and the only witness whom I wish, is she who can thank me for it.

ALC. I take great interest, Amphitryon, in the glory which your illustrious exploits shed upon you; and the fame of your victory moves my heart in its most sensible part. But when I perceive that this fatal honor keeps away from me him whom I love, I cannot forbear, in my excessive tenderness, to bear it some ill-will, and even to cavil at the supreme order which makes you the Thebans' general. It is sweet after a victory to see the glory of one whom we love; but among the perils inseparable from this glory, a fatal stroke, alas! may quickly come. With how many fears is our heart seized at the rumor of the slightest skirmish! In the horrors of such a thought, can we ever see aught with which to console ourselves for the threatened blow? And with whatever laurels the conqueror may be crowned, whatever share one may have in that high honor, is it worth that which it costs to a tender heart, which trembles every moment for him whom it loves?[18]

JUP. I see nothing in you but what increases my passion; everything proves to my eyes a thoroughly enamored heart; and it is, I own it, a charming thing, to find so much love in a beloved object. But, if I may dare to say so, one scruple troubles me in the tender sentiments which you show to me; and in order to relish them the more, my passion, dear Alcmena, would owe nothing to your duty. Let the favors, which I receive from you, be due to your love, and to my person only; and let not my position as your husband be the motive for their bestowal.

ALC. It is from that name, however, that the ardor which devours me holds its right to show itself; and I do not understand this new scruple with which your passion is perplexed.

JUP. Ah! the love and tenderness which I have for you exceeds also that of a husband; and in those sweet moments you are not aware of its delicacy: you do not understand that an enamored heart is studiously intent upon a hundred trifles, and worries itself about the manner of being happy. In me, fair and charming Alcmena, you behold a lover and a husband; but, to speak frankly, it is the lover only I care for; and I feel that, when near you, the husband checks him. This lover, jealous of your affection to the last degree, wishes your love to abandon itself to him alone; and his passion desires nothing that the husband gives him. From the fountain-head, he wishes to obtain your love, and to owe nothing to the bonds of wedlock; nothing to the wearying duty which makes the heart ache, and by which the sweetness of the most valued favors is daily poisoned. In the scruples, in short, by which he is tormented, he wishes, in order to satisfy his delicacy, that you separate himself from that which is offensive to him, and that the husband be only for your virtue; and that the lover shall have all the affection

and tenderness of your heart, which is all gentleness.

ALC. Really, Amphitryon, you must be jesting, to talk in this manner; and I should be afraid, that if anyone heard you, you would be thought out of your right senses.

JUP. There is more sense in this discourse, Alcmena, than you think. But a longer stay would render me too guilty, and the time presses for my return to the port. Farewell! The harsh dictates of my duty tear me away from you for a while; but, fair Alcmena, try at least, I pray you, when you see the husband, to recollect the lover.

ALC. I do not separate that which the gods unite, and husband and lover are very precious to me.

SCENE IV.—CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

CLE. (*Aside.*) O Heaven! how sweet are the caresses of an ardently beloved husband! and how far is my wretch of a husband from all this tenderness.

MERC. (*Aside.*) I must inform Night that she has but to furl all her sails, and the sun may now arise from his bed to put out the stars.

CLE. (*Stopping Mercury.*) What! Is it thus that you leave me?

MERC. And how, then? Would you wish me not to acquit myself of my duty, and follow Amphitryon's footsteps?

CLE. But to separate from me in this abrupt fashion, you wretch!

MERC. A fine subject to be angry about! We have still so long to remain together!

CLE. But what! to go in such a brutal manner, without saying a single kind word to cheer me up!

MERC. Where the deuce would you have my brains fetch you this silly stuff from? Fifteen years of marriage exhaust one's discourse; and we have said all that we had to say to each other long ago.

CLE. Look at Amphitryon, you wretch; see how he shows his ardor for Alcmena: and after that, blush for the little passion that you display toward your wife.

MERC. Eh! good gracious, Cleanthis, they are still lovers! There comes a certain age when all this is done with; and what in those beginnings suits them well enough, would look very awkward in us, old married folks. It would be a pretty sight to us, face to face, saying sweet things to each other.

CLE. What! perfidious wretch, am I past hoping that a heart might sigh for me?

MERC. No, I should be sorry to say so; but I have too gray a beard to dare to sigh, and I should make you die with laughter.

CLE. You hangdog, do you deserve the signal luck of having a virtuous woman like me for your wife?

MERC. Great heavens! if anything, you are too virtuous; all this merit is of little value to me. Be a little less an honest woman, and do not pester my brains so much.

CLE. How! do you find fault with me for being too virtuous?

MERC. A woman's sweet temper is her chief charm; and your virtue makes such a clamor that it never ceases deafening me.

CLE. You wish for a heart full of feigned tenderness, for those women with the laudable

and pretty talent of knowing how to smother their husbands with caresses in order to make them swallow the existence of a gallant.

MERC. Upon my word, shall I tell you candidly? An ideal evil affects only fools; and I would take for my device: "Less honor and more quietness."

CLE. What! would you endure, without repugnance, that I should love a gallant without any shame?

MERC. Yes, if I were no longer pestered with your scolding, and if I could see you change your temper and your way. I would sooner have a convenient vice, than a worrying virtue. Farewell, Cleanthis, my dear soul; I must follow Amphitryon.

CLE. (*Alone.*) Why has not my heart sufficient resolution to punish this infamous wretch! Ah, how it maddens me, in this instance, to be an honest woman!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Amphitryon, Sosia.

Amph. Come here, you gallows-bird, come here! Do you know, Master Scoundrel, that your talk is enough for me to knock you down, and that my anger only waits for a stick to beat you as I wish?

Sos. If you take it in that strain, sir, I have nothing more to say; and you will be always in the right.

Amph. What, you wretch! you wish to foist upon me as truths stories which I know to be impossibly extravagant?

Sos. No: I am the servant, and you are the master; it shall be just as you wish it, sir.

Amph. Come, I will suppress the anger that is burning within me, and listen at length to the details of your mission. I must clear up this confusion before seeing my wife. Collect yourself, consider well within yourself, and answer word for word to each question.

Sos. But for fear of making a mistake, tell me beforehand, if you please, in what manner you wish this matter explained. Shall I speak, sir, according to my conscience, or in the manner usually employed when addressing the great? Must I tell the truth, or am I to be complaisant?

AMPH. No: I shall only compel you to give me a very straightforward account.

SOS. Very well. That is sufficient, leave it to me: you have only to question me.

AMPH. Upon the order which I lately gave you . . .

SOS. I set out, the skies veiled with a black crape, swearing strongly against you under this vexatious martyrdom, and cursing twenty times the order of which you speak.

AMPH. How so, you scoundrel!

SOS. Sir, you have only to say the word, and I shall tell lies, if you wish.

AMPH. That is how a servant shows his zeal for us! No matter. What happened to you on the road?

SOS. To have a mortal fright at the slightest object that I saw.

AMPH. Poltroon!

SOS. Nature has her whims in forming us; she bestows on us various inclinations; some find a thousand delights in exposing themselves; I find them in keeping myself safe.

AMPH. When you reached the house . . .

SOS. I wished to rehearse a little before the door, in what strain and in what manner I would give a glorious account of the battle.

AMPH. What then?

SOS. Someone came to disturb and embarrass me.

AMPH. Who?

SOS. Sosia; another I, jealous of your orders, whom you sent from the port to Alcmena, and who has as full knowledge of our secrets as I who speak to you.

AMPH. What tales!

SOS. No, sir, it is the plain truth: this I, sooner than I, found himself at our house; and I swear to you, sir, that I was there before I had arrived.

AMPH. Whence proceeds, I pray you, this confounded nonsense? Is it a dream? is it drunkenness? aberration of mind, or a bad joke?

SOS. No, it is the thing as it is, and not at all an idle tale. I am a man of honor, I give you my word! and you may believe it, if you please. I tell you that, believing there was but one Sosia, I found myself two at our house; and that of these two I's, jealous of each other, one is at home, and the other is with you; that the I whom you see here, tired to death, found the other I fresh, jovial and active, and having no anxiety but to fight and break bones.

AMPH. I must be, I confess, of a temper very staid, very calm, and very gentle, to allow a servant to entertain me with such nonsense!

SOS. If you put yourself in a passion, no more conference between us; you know all is over at once.

AMPH. No, I will listen to you without excitement; I promised it. But tell me in sober conscience, is there any shadow of probability in this new mystery which you have just been telling me?

SOS. No: you are right, and the affair must appear to everyone past belief. It is an incomprehensible fact, an extravagant, ridiculous, irksome tale: it shocks common sense; but it is not the less a fact.

AMPH. How can a man believe it, unless he be bereft of his senses?

SOS. I did not believe it myself without the utmost difficulty. I thought myself touched in my mind to believe myself two, and for a long time I treated this other

self as an impostor: but he forced me at last to recognize myself; I saw that it was I, without the least stratagem; from head to foot he is exactly like me—handsome, a noble mien, well favored, charming manners; in short, two drops of milk are not more alike; and were it not that his hands are somewhat too weighty, I should be perfectly satisfied about it.

AMPH. With how much patience I must arm myself! But after all, did you not go into the house?

SOS. That is good, go in! Eh! In what way? Did I ever wish to listen to reason? and did I not forbid myself to enter our door?

AMPH. How?

SOS. With a stick, of which my back feels still the smarting pain.

AMPH. You have been beaten?

SOS. Indeed, I have.

AMPH. And by whom?

SOS. By myself.

AMPH. You, beat yourself?

SOS. Yes, I; not the I that is here, but the I from the house, who strikes like four.

AMPH. Heaven confound you for talking to me thus!

SOS. I am not joking; the I whom I met just now has great advantages over the I who is speaking to you. He has a strong arm and a lofty courage; I have had proofs of it; and this devil of an I has thrashed me properly; he is a fellow who does impossible things.

AMPH. Let us have done. Have you seen my wife?

SOS. No.

AMPH. Why not?

SOS. For a sufficiently strong reason.

AMPH. Who hindered you, rascal? Explain yourself.

SOS. Must I repeat the same thing twenty times to you? I, I tell you, this I stronger than I; this I who, by force, took possession of the door; this I who made me decamp; this I who wishes to be the only I; this I jealous of myself; this valiant I, whose anger showed itself to this cowardly I; in short, this I who is at home; this I who has shown himself my master; this I who has racked me with blows.[19]

AMPH. His brain must be disturbed by having had too much drink this morning.

SOS. May I be hanged if I have had anything but water! You may believe me on my oath.

AMPH. Then your senses must have been asleep, and some bewildering dream has shown you all these confused fancies which you foist upon me for truths.

SOS. As little as the other. I have not been asleep, and do not even feel inclined for it. I am speaking to you wide-awake; I was quite wide-awake this morning, upon my life, and quite wide-awake was also the other Sosia, when he belabored me so well.

AMPH. Follow me; I command you to be silent. You have wearied my mind enough; and I must be the veriest fool to have the patience to listen to the nonsense which a servant utters.

SOS. (*Aside.*) Every discourse is nonsense coming from an obscure fellow. If some great man were to say the same things, they would be exquisite words.

AMPH. Let us go in without waiting any longer. But here comes Alcmena in all her charms. Doubtless she does not expect me

at this moment, and my arrival will surprise her.

SCENE II.—ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

ALC. (*Without seeing Amphitryon.*) Come, Cleanthis, let us approach the gods and offer up our homages for my husband, and render them thanks for the glorious success, of which Thebes, by his arm, reaps the advantage. (*Perceiving Amphitryon.*) O ye gods!

AMPH. Heaven grant that victorious Amphitryon may be once more met with pleasure by his wife! And that this day may be propitious to my passion, and restore you to me with the same affection! May I find as much fondness as my heart brings back to you!

ALC. What! returned so soon?

AMPH. Truly, this is, in this instance, to give me but a sorry proof of your affection: and this "What! returned so soon?" is hardly the language on such an occasion of a heart truly inflamed with love. I presumed to flatter myself that I had stayed away from you too long. The expectation of an ardently longed-for return invests each moment with excessive length; and the absence of what we love, however short, is always too long.

ALC. I do not see . . .

AMPH. No, Alcmena, we measure the time in such cases by our own impatience; and you count the moments of absence as one who does not love. When we really love, the least separation kills us; and the one whom we delight to see never comes back too soon. I confess that my fond affection has reason to complain at your reception; and I expected different transports of joy and tenderness from your heart.

ALC. I am at a loss to understand on what you found the words which I hear you speak; and if you complain of me, I do not know in good truth what would needs satisfy you. It seems to me that last night, at your happy return, I showed a sufficiently tender joy, and repaid your proofs of affection by everything which you had reason to expect from my love.

AMPH. How?

ALC. Did I not show plainly enough the sudden ecstasies of a perfect joy! And can a heart's transports be better expressed at the return of a husband who is tenderly loved?

AMPH. What is it you tell me?

ALC. That even your affection showed an incredible joy at my reception; and that, having left me at the break of day, I do not see that my surprise at this sudden return is so much to blame.

AMPH. Has some dream last night, Alcmena, anticipated in your fancy the reality of my return, which I hastened; and having, perhaps, used me kindly in your sleep, does your heart imagine my love sufficiently repaid?

ALC. Has some disease in your mind, Amphitryon, by its malignity, obscured the truth of last night's return? and as to the tender welcome I gave you, does your

heart pretend to rob me of all my honest affection?

AMPH. Methinks this disease with which you entertain me is somewhat strange.

ALC. It is the only thing one can give in exchange for the dream of which you talk to me.

AMPH. Unless by a dream, one can certainly not excuse what you tell me now.

ALC. Unless by a disease which troubles your mind, one cannot justify what I hear from you.

AMPH. Let us have done with this disease for a moment, Alcmena.

ALC. Let us have done with this dream for a moment, Amphitryon.

AMPH. As to the subject in question, the jest may be carried too far.

ALC. Undoubtedly; and, as a sure proof of it, I begin to feel somewhat moved.

AMPH. It is in this way then that you wish to try to make amends for the welcome of which I complained?

ALC. And you wish to try to divert yourself by this feint?

AMPH. For Heaven's sake! let us cease this, I pray you, Alcmena, and let us talk seriously.

ALC. It is carrying the jest too far, Amphitryon; let us end this raillery.

AMPH. What! dare you maintain to my face that I was seen at this spot before this hour?

ALC. What! have you the assurance to deny that you came hither yesterday toward evening?

AMPH. I! I came yesterday?

ALC. Undoubtedly; and, just before the break of day, you went away again.

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Heavens! was ever such a debate as this heard of? And who would not be astonished at all this? Sosia!

SOS. She has need of half-a-dozen grains of hellebore, sir; her brain is turned.

AMPH. Alcmena, in the name of all the gods, this discourse will have strange consequences! Recollect yourself a little better, and reflect upon what you say.

ALC. I am, indeed, seriously reflecting; and all the inmates of the house witnessed your arrival. I do not know what motive makes you act thus; but if the thing had need of proof, if it were true that one could not recollect such a thing, from whom, but yourself, could I hold the news of the latest of all your battles, and the five diamonds worn by Pterelas, plunged into eternal night by the force of your arm? What surer proof could one wish?

AMPH. What? have I already given you the cluster of diamonds which I had for my share, and which I intended for you?

ALC. Assuredly it is not difficult to convince you thoroughly of it.

AMPH. And how?

ALC. (*Pointing to the cluster of diamonds at her girdle.*) Here it is.

AMPH. Sosia!

SOS. (*Taking a casket from his pocket.*) She is jesting, and I have it here. The feint is useless, sir.

AMPH. (*Examining the casket.*) The seal is unbroken?

ALC. (*Presenting the diamonds to Amphitryon.*) Is it an illusion? There. Will you think this proof strong enough?

AMPH. O Heaven! O just Heaven!

ALC. Come, Amphitryon, you are joking with me by acting in this way; and you ought to be ashamed of it.

AMPH. Break this seal quickly.

SOS. (*Having opened the casket.*) Upon my word, it is empty. It must have been

abstracted by witchcraft, or else it must have come by itself, without a guide, to her whom it knew that it was intended to adorn.

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Ye gods, whose power directs all things, what is this adventure, and what can I augur from it at which my passion startles not?

SOS. (*To Amphitryon.*) If she speaks the truth, we share the same fate, and like me, sir, you are double.[20]

AMPH. Hold your tongue.

ALC. What is there to be so much surprised at? and whence this great emotion?

AMPH. (*Aside.*) O Heaven! what strange confusion! I see supernatural incidents, and my honor fears an adventure which my senses do not understand.

ALC. Do you still think to deny your sudden return, when you have so sensible a proof of it?

AMPH. No; but be so kind, if it be possible, to relate to me what happened at this return?

ALC. Since you ask an account of the matter, you still wish to insinuate that it was not you?

AMPH. Pray, pardon me; but I have a certain reason for asking you to relate it.

ALC. Have the important affairs which may occupy your mind, made you so soon lose the remembrance of it?

AMPH. Perhaps so; but, in short, you would oblige me by telling me the whole story.

ALC. The story is not long. I advanced toward you, full of fond surprise; I embraced you tenderly, and more than once testified my joy.

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Ah! I could have done without so sweet a welcome.

ALC. You first made me this valuable present, destined for me from the conquered plunder. Your heart vehemently unfolded to me all the fire of your passion, and the carking cares which had kept it enchained in the joy of seeing me again, the pangs of absence, all the trouble caused by your impatience to return; and never, on similar occasions, did your love seem to me so tender and so passionate.

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Can one be more exquisitely tortured to death!

ALC. As you may well believe, all these transports, all this tenderness, did not displease me; and if I must confess it, my heart, Amphitryon, found a thousand charms in them.

AMPH. What then, pray?

ALC. We interrupted each other with a thousand fond inquiries. The repast was served. We supped by ourselves, and, the supper over, we retired to bed.

AMPH. Together?

ALC. Assuredly. What a question is that!

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Ah! this is the most cruel blow of all, and of which my jealous passion trembles to assure itself.

ALC. Whence comes, at this word, so deep a blush? Have I done any harm in sleeping with you?

AMPH. No, to my great grief, it was not I; and whosoever says that I came hither yesterday, tells, of all falsehoods, the most horrible.

ALC. Amphitryon!

AMPH. Perfidious woman!

ALC. Ah, what outburst is this!

AMPH. No, no; no more fondness, no more respect: this misfortune puts an end to all my firmness; and my heart, at this fatal moment, breathes only fury and revenge.

ALC. And on whom would you be revenged? and what want of faith makes you treat me now as a criminal?

AMPH. I know not, but it was not I; and this is a despair which renders me capable of anything.

ALC. Away, unworthy husband, the fact speaks for itself, and the imposture is frightful. This is taking too great an advantage of me, and it is too much to condemn me for faithlessness. If, in this confused outburst, you are seeking a pretext for breaking the nuptial bonds which hold me enchained to you, all these excuses are superfluous, for I am fully determined that this very day all our bonds shall be dissolved.[21]

AMPH. After the disgraceful insult which has been revealed to me, it is what, no doubt, you should prepare for: it is the least that can be expected; and things may, perhaps, not rest there. The dishonor is certain, my misfortune is plainly revealed to me, and my love endeavors in vain to conceal it from me; but I am as yet unacquainted with the particulars, and my just wrath demands to be enlightened. Your brother can openly vouch for it that I did not leave him until this morning; I am going to seek him, in order that I may confound you about this return which is falsely imputed to me. Afterward, we shall penetrate to the bottom of a mystery unheard of until now; and, in the transports of a righteous wrath, woe be to him who has betrayed me!

SOS. Sir . . .

AMPH. Do not accompany me, but wait here for me.

CLE. (*To Alcmena.*) Must I . . .

ALC. I can attend to nothing: leave me alone, and follow me not.[22]

SCENE III.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. (*Aside.*) Something must have disordered his brain; but the brother will immediately put an end to this quarrel.

SOS. (*Aside.*) This is a sufficiently severe blow for my master; and his adventure is cruel. I very much fear something of the same kind for myself, and I will very gently explain myself to her.

CLE. (*Aside.*) Let us see whether he will so much as speak to me! But I will let nothing appear.

SOS. (*Aside.*) These things are often annoying to know, and I tremble to ask her. Would it not be better, for safety's sake, to remain altogether ignorant of what may be the truth? Yet, at all events, I must try and find out. I cannot help doing so. One of the weaknesses of human nature is curiosity to learn things which it would not like to know. May Heaven preserve you, Cleanthis!

CLE. Ah! you dare to come near me, you wretch?

SOS. Great Heaven! what ails you? You are always in a temper, and you get angry about nothing!

CLE. What do you call "about nothing," say?

SOS. I call "about nothing" what is called "about nothing" in verse as well as prose; and nothing, as you well know, means nothing, or, at least, very little.

CLE. I do not know what prevents my scratching your eyes out, infamous wretch, and teaching you how far the anger of a woman can go.

SOS. Hullo! Whence comes this furious outburst?

CLE. What! then you reckon as nothing what you have done to me?

SOS. What?

CLE. What? you pretend to be innocent? Is it by the example of your master that you will say that you did not return here?

SOS. No. I know the contrary too well; but I shall not be cunning with you. We had drunk of I do not know what wine, which made me forget all that I might have done.

CLE. You imagine, perhaps, to excuse yourself by this trick . . .

SOS. No; seriously, you may believe me. I was in a condition in which I may have done things for which I should be sorry, and of which I have no recollection.

CLE. You do not at all remember the manner in which you treated me when you came from the port?

SOS. Not in the least. You had better give me an account of it; I am just and sincere, and would condemn myself if I am wrong.

CLE. How! Amphitryon having warned me, I sat up until you came; but I never beheld such coldness; I had to remind you of your having a wife; and when I wished to kiss you, you turned away your head, and presented your ear.

SOS. Good!

CLE. What do you mean by good?

SOS. Good heavens! You do not know why I talk thus, Cleanthis? I had been eating garlic, and, like a well-behaved man, did quite right in turning my breath a little away from you.

CLE. I gave you to understand the tenderness of my heart; but you were as deaf as a post to all that I said; and not a kind word passed your lips.

SOS. Courage!

CLE. In short, notwithstanding my advances, my chaste flame found nothing in you but ice; and I felt disappointed to receive no response from you, even so far as to refuse to take your place in bed which the laws of wedlock oblige you to occupy.

SOS. What! did I not go to bed?

CLE. No, you sneak.

SOS. Is it possible?

CLE. Wretch, it is but too true. Of all affronts this is the greatest; and, instead of your heart making amends for it this morning, you separated from me with words of undisguised contempt.

SOS. Bravo, Sosia!

CLE. Eh, what! This is the effect of my complaint! You laugh at this pretty piece of work!

SOS. How satisfied I am with myself!

CLE. Is this the way to express your regret for such an outrage?

SOS. I should never have believed that I could so well control myself.

CLE. Far from condemning yourself for such perfidious behavior, you show your joy for it in your face!

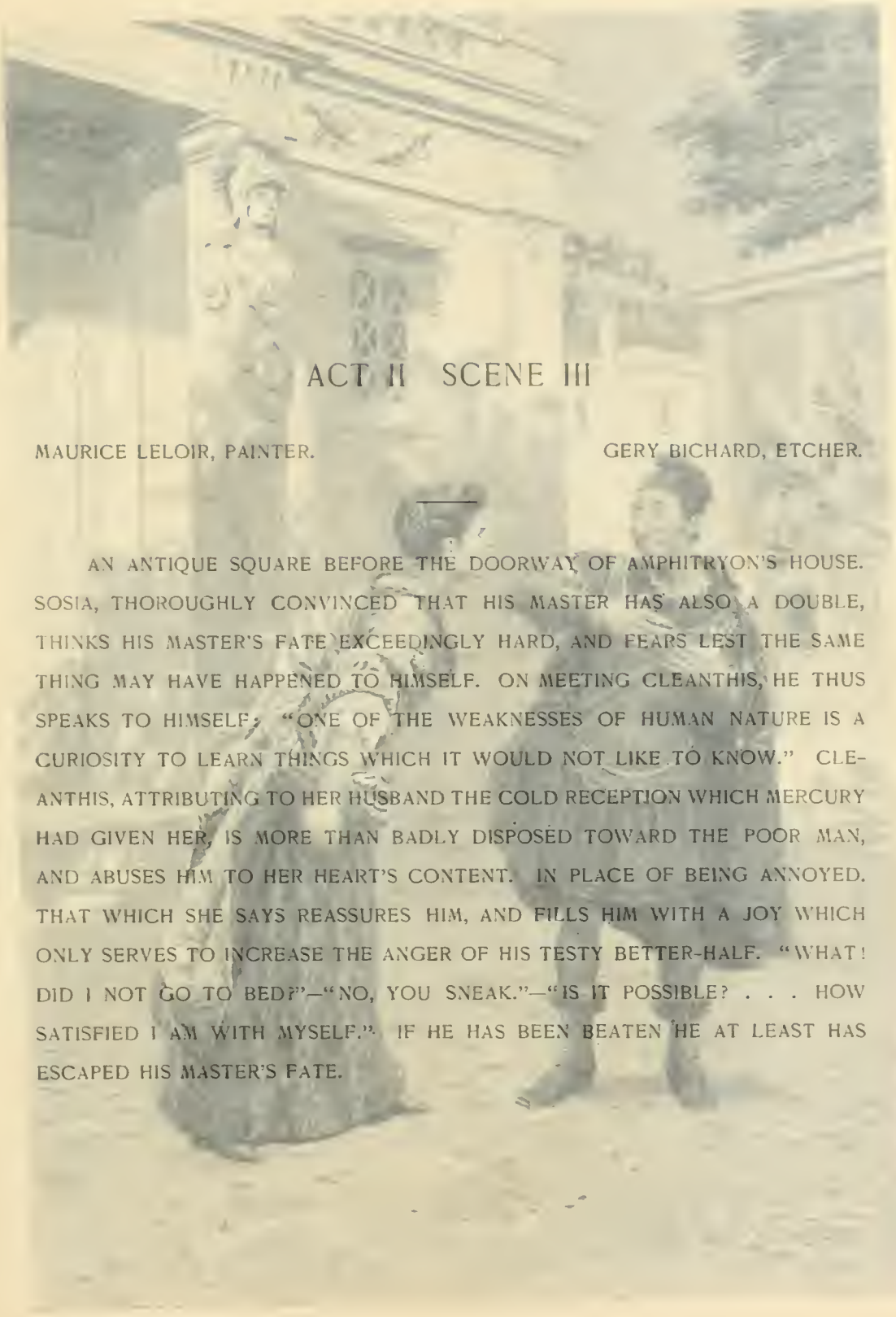
SOS. Good gracious! not so fast! If I appear to be joyous, think that I have a strong inward reason for it, and that, without thinking of it, I never did better than in behaving to you in such a way just now.

CLE. Are you making fun of me, you wretch?

SOS. No, I am speaking frankly to you. In the condition in which I was, I had a certain fear, which, by your words, you have dissipated. I was very apprehensive, and feared that I had committed some foolishness with you.

CLE. What is this fear? and let us know wherefore?

SOS. The doctors say that, when one is drunk, one should abstain from one's wife,



ACT II SCENE III

MAURICE LELOIR, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

AN ANTIQUE SQUARE BEFORE THE DOORWAY OF AMPHITRYON'S HOUSE. SOSIA, THOROUGHLY CONVINCED THAT HIS MASTER HAS ALSO A DOUBLE, THINKS HIS MASTER'S FATE EXCEEDINGLY HARD, AND FEARS LEST THE SAME THING MAY HAVE HAPPENED TO HIMSELF. ON MEETING CLEANTHIS, HE THUS SPEAKS TO HIMSELF: "ONE OF THE WEAKNESSES OF HUMAN NATURE IS A CURIOSITY TO LEARN THINGS WHICH IT WOULD NOT LIKE TO KNOW." CLEANTHIS, ATTRIBUTING TO HER HUSBAND THE COLD RECEPTION WHICH MERCURY HAD GIVEN HER, IS MORE THAN BADLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE POOR MAN, AND ABUSES HIM TO HER HEART'S CONTENT. IN PLACE OF BEING ANNOYED, THAT WHICH SHE SAYS REASSURES HIM, AND FILLS HIM WITH A JOY WHICH ONLY SERVES TO INCREASE THE ANGER OF HIS TESTY BETTER-HALF. "WHAT! DID I NOT GO TO BED?"—"NO, YOU SNEAK."—"IS IT POSSIBLE? . . . HOW SATISFIED I AM WITH MYSELF." IF HE HAS BEEN BEATEN HE AT LEAST HAS ESCAPED HIS MASTER'S FATE.

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Maurice Leloir

and that, in that state there can be no other result than children who are dull, and who cannot live. Reflect, if my heart had not armed itself with coldness, what inconveniences might have followed!

CLE. I do not care a pin for doctors, with their insipid arguments. Let them give rules to the sick, without wishing to govern people who are in good health. They meddle with too many affairs in pretending to put a curb upon our chaste desires; and in addition to the dog-days, they give us, besides their severe rules, a hundred cock-and-bull stories into the bargain.

SOS. Gently.

CLE. No. I maintain that theirs is a wrong conclusion; those reasons emanate from crack-brained people. Neither wine nor time can be fatal to the performance of the duties of conjugal love; and the doctors are asses.

SOS. I beseech you, moderate your rage against them; they are honest people, whatever the world may say of them.

CLE. You are altogether in the wrong box; your submission is in vain; your excuse will not pass; and sooner or later I will pay you out, between ourselves, for the contempt which you show me every day. I keep in mind all the particulars of our conversation, and I shall try to profit by the liberty which you allow me, you cowardly and perfidious husband.

SOS. What?

CLE. You told me just now, you mean wretch, that you would freely consent that I should love another.

SOS. Ah! as for that, I am wrong. I retract; my honor is too much concerned. You had better beware of giving way to that passion.

CLE. If I can, however, but once make my mind up to it . . .

SOS. Let us suspend this conversation for a little. Amphitryon returns, who seems quite contented.

SCENE IV. — JUPITER, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. (*Aside.*) I shall take this opportunity of appeasing Alcmena, of banishing the grief in which her heart wishes to indulge, and, under the pretext that brings me hither, of giving my passion the sweet pleasure of reconciling myself with her. (*To Cleanthis.*) Alcmena is up stairs, is she not?

CLE. Yes; full of uneasiness she seeks solitude, and has forbidden me to follow her.

JUP. Whatever prohibition she may have made does not apply to me.

SCENE V.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. He has soon got over his grief, from what I can see.

SOS. What say you, Cleanthis, to this cheerful mien, after his terrible quarrel?

CLE. That we would do well to send all the men to the devil, and that the best of them is not worth much.

SOS. These things are said in a passion; but you are too much taken up with the men;

and, upon my word, you would all look very glum, if the devil should carry us all off.

CLE. Indeed . . .

SOS. Hush! Here they come.

SCENE VI. — JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. Alas! Do you wish to drive me to despair? Stay, fair Alcmena.

ALC. No, I cannot stay with the author of my grief.

JUP. I entreat you.

ALC. Leave me.

JUP. What . . .

ALC. Leave me, I tell you.

JUP. (*Softly, aside.*) Her tears touch me to the heart, and her grief saddens me. (*Aloud.*) Allow my heart to . . .

ALC. No, do not follow me.

JUP. Whither would you go?

ALC. Where you shall not be.[23]

JUP. That would be a vain attempt on your part. I am attached to your beauty by too tight a bond to be separated for one moment from it. I shall follow you everywhere, Alcmena.

ALC. And I shall fly from you everywhere.

JUP. I am very dreadful, then?

ALC. More than I can express, to me. Yes, I look upon you as a frightful monster, a cruel, furious monster, whose approach is to be feared; as a monster to fly from everywhere. The sight of you gives me incredible pain; it is a torment that overwhelms me; and I see nothing under heaven of what is frightful, horrible, odious, which would not be to me more bearable than you.

JUP. This is, alas! what your own mouth says.

ALC. I have much more in my heart; and it is but too sorry that it cannot find words to express it all.

JUP. And what has my passion done to you, Alcmena, that I should be looked upon by you as a monster.

ALC. Ah! just heavens! and he can ask that! Is it not enough to drive one distracted?

JUP. Ah! in a gentler spirit . . .

ALC. No; I wish neither to see nor to hear anything of you.

JUP. Have you the heart to treat me thus? Is this the tender love which was to last so long, when I came hither yesterday?

ALC. No, no, it is not; and your cowardly insults have willed it otherwise. It exists no longer, this passionate and tender love; you have cruelly destroyed it in my heart by a hundred piercing wounds. In its place stands an unbending wrath, a keen resentment, an invincible contempt, the despair of a heart justly incensed, which intends to hate you for this grievous affront, as much as it intended to love you; and which means to hate as much as possible.

JUP. Alas! how little strength your love must have had, if it can be destroyed by so small a matter! Must that which was only play, occasion a divorce? and is there any occasion to be so angry at a joke?

ALC. Ah! it is just this at which I am offended, and which my anger cannot forgive: I should have felt less hurt at the true

outbursts of a fit of jealousy. Jealousy produces impressions of which the force often carries us away; and the most collected mind at such times finds it, without doubt, difficult enough to be answerable for its emotions. The violence of a heart which may have been mistaken has something to bring back a soul which it has offended, and in the love which gave it birth it finds, at least, in spite of all its violence, reasons for being excused. Those outbursts have always as an excuse against anger that cause which created them; and we easily forgive that which we cannot master. But, in wantonness of heart, to get into an uncontrollable fury, so deeply to injure, without cause, the tenderness and honor of a heart that dearly loves you, ah! is too cruel a blow, and one which my grief will never forget.

JUP. Yes, you are right, Alcmena; I must submit. This action is no doubt an odious crime; I do not pretend to defend it any longer; but allow my heart to exonerate itself in your eyes, and to tell who is to blame for this insulting outburst. To make a frank avowal of it, Alcmena, it is the husband who has committed all the evil; it is the husband whom you must regard as guilty: the lover had no share in this brutal transport, and his heart is not capable of offending you. This heart has too much respect and tenderness for you ever to dream of it; and if it had the guilty weakness to do aught to wound you, he would pierce it with a hundred stabs before your face. But the husband has stepped out of that humble respect which should always be your due; by his harsh proceeding, the husband has shown himself, and he thought that the laws of marriage permitted him everything. Yes, it is no doubt he who is guilty toward you; he alone has maltreated your amiable person. Hate, detest the husband; I consent to it, and leave him to your mercy; but, Alcmena, preserve the lover from the resentment which such an offense raises in you; do not throw the effect of it on him; separate him somewhat from the guilty one; and, in order to be just, do not punish him for what he has not done.

ALC. Ah! all these subtleties are but frivolous excuses; and such language is only an annoyance to irritated minds. You use in vain this ridiculous prevarication. I distinguish nothing in him who offends me; everything becomes the object of my anger, and in its just violence, the husband and the lover are confounded. Both alike occupy my thoughts; and, by my wounded heart, are painted in the same colors to my eyes. Both alike are criminal! both alike have offended me; and both alike are odious to me.

JUP. Very well! since you wish it, I must then charge myself with the crime. Yes, you are right when you immolate me to your resentment, as a guilty victim. A too just anger against me sways you; and all this great wrath which you now display is making me suffer only lawful torments. It is right that you shun me, and that in your anger you threaten to fly from me everywhere. I must be an odious object to you; you must wish me a great deal of harm. My transgression in having offended your charming eyes surpasses every horror; it is a crime to offend men and gods; and in short, I deserve as punishment for my audacity that your hatred should employ its most furious darts against me. But my heart craves your mercy; to ask it I throw myself on my knees, and implore it in the name of the most brilliant flame of the tenderest love with which a soul

can ever burn for you. If your heart, charming Alcmena, refuses me the pardon which I dare to request, a sudden stroke must deliver me by death from the harsh rigor of a penalty which I am unable to endure. Yes, this condition drives me to despair. Do not think, Alcmena, that loving as I do, your heavenly charms, I can live one day under your anger. The merciless length of those moments makes my afflicted heart already succumb beneath their deadly blows; and the cruel wounds of a thousand vultures are nothing compared to my violent grief. Alcmena, you have only to declare it to me if I have no pardon to hope for: this sword shall immediately, by a well-aimed blow, pierce, before your eyes, the heart of a miserable wretch; that heart, that treacherous heart, only too deserving of death, since it could offend so adorable a being; only too happy if, in descending to the dark regions, my death may appease your anger; and if after this mournful day, it leaves in your soul no impression of hatred whilst remembering my love! That is all which I expect as a sovereign favor.

ALC. Ah! too cruel husband!

JUP. Say, speak, Alcmena!

ALC. Must I still feel kindness for you, and see you outrage me by so many insults?

JUP. Whatever resentment an outrage may cause, can it hold out against the remorse of a really enamored heart?

ALC. A heart full of passion would sooner expose itself to a thousand deaths, than offend the object of its love.

JUP. The more one loves, the less difficulty one feels . . .

ALC. No, speak no more about it; you deserve my hatred.

JUP. You hate me, then?

ALC. I make every effort to do so, and I am vexed to think that all your insults cannot bring my heart even so far to indulge in that revenge.

JUP. But why this violence, since, to revenge yourself, I offer you my life? Pronounce its doom, and immediately I shall obey.

ALC. Can she who cannot hate desire your death?

JUP. And I, I cannot live unless you forego this anger that overwhelms me, and unless you grant me the favor of a pardon which I implore at your feet. (*Sosia and Cleanthis kneel likewise.*) Decide upon one of the two quickly, either to punish, or to absolve me.

ALC. Alas! what I can resolve has appeared much clearer than I wish. My heart has too well betrayed me, for me to wish to keep up the wrath which you mention; to say that we cannot hate, is it not saying that we forgive?

JUP. Ah, charming Alcmena, I must in the excess of my joy . . .

ALC. Desist; I am angry with myself for so much weakness.[24]

JUP. Go, Sosia, and make haste; a sweet rapture charms my soul. See what officers of the army you can find, and invite them to dine with me. (*Softly, aside.*) Mercury can supply his place, while he is away from this.

SCENE VII.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

SOS. Well! Cleanthis, you see how they arrange matters. Will you, in imitation of their example, make up a little peace between us, some little reconciliation?

CLE. For the sake of your beautiful face,[25] truly! yes, to be sure.

ACT II SCENE VI

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

THE SCENE OF THE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN JUPITER, DISGUISED AS AMPHITRYON, AND ALCMENA. THE TRUE AMPHITRYON HAVING APPEARED AND AFTER VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS AND MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS, HAVING QUARRELED WITH ALCMENA, JUPITER DESIRES, IN AS FAR AS IT LIES IN HIS POWER, TO REMEDY THE EVIL DONE AND ACCORDINGLY COMES TO MAKE HIS PEACE WITH ALCMENA. AFTER MUCH PLEADING AND HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE GUILT OF THE TRUE AMPHITRYON IN UPBRAIDING ALCMENA, JUPITER THUS GAINS HIS CAUSE:

AND I, I CANNOT LIVE UNLESS YOU FOREGO THIS ANGER THAT OVERWHELMS ME, AND UNLESS YOU GRANT ME THE FAVOR OF A PARDON.

Alc. I made every effort to do so, and I am vexed to think that your insults cannot bring my heart even so far to indulge in that revenge.

Jup. But why this violence, since, to revenge yourself, I offer you my life? Pronounce its doom, and immediately I shall obey.

Alc. Can she who cannot hate desire your death?

Jup. And I, I cannot live unless you forego this anger that overwhelms me, and unless you grant me the favor of a pardon which I [illegible] at your feet. (*Sosia and Cleanthis [illegible] upon one of the two [illegible] me.*)

Edm. Hedouin, painter.

F. L. Kirkpatrick, etcher.

THE SCENE OF THE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN JUPITER, DISGUISED AS AMPHITRYON, AND ALCMENA, HAVING APPEARED AND MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS, HAVING QUARRELED WITH ALCMENA, JUPITER DESIRES, IN AS FAR AS IT LIES IN HIS POWER, TO REMEDY THE EVIL DONE AND ACCORDINGLY COMES TO MAKE HIS PEACE WITH ALCMENA. AFTER MUCH PLEADING AND HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE GUILT OF THE TRUE AMPHITRYON IN UPBRAIDING ALCMENA, JUPITER THUS GAINS HIS CAUSE:

AND I, I CANNOT LIVE UNLESS YOU FOREGO THIS ANGER THAT OVERWHELMS ME, AND UNLESS YOU GRANT ME THE FAVOR OF A PARDON.

VII.—Cleanthis, Sosia.

Sos. Well! Cleanthis, you see how they arrange matters. Will you, in imitation of their example, make up a little peace between us, since we are reconciled?

Cle. For the sake of your beautiful face,* truly! yes, to be sure.

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Sos. What! you will not then?

Cle. No.

Sos. It signifies little to me. So much the worse for you.

Cle. Well, well, come back.

Sos. Zounds! no, I shall do nothing of the kind, and I shall be angry in my turn, now.

Cle. Get you gone, you wretch! leave me alone: one gets weary sometimes of being a virtuous woman.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Amphitryon (*Alone*).

Yes, without doubt, fate conceals him purposely from me; and I am weary at last of trying to find him out. Nothing can be more cruel than my lot. Notwithstanding all my peregrinations, I cannot find him for whom I am looking; I meet all those for whom I do not look. A thousand cruel bores, who do not imagine themselves to be so, without knowing much of me, are driving me mad with their congratulations upon our exploits. In the cruel perplexity of the care that harasses me, they overwhelm me with their embraces, and their rejoicings only increase my uneasiness. In vain I endeavor to pass them by, to fly from their persecutions; their killing friendship[26] delays me everywhere; and whilst I reply to the ardor of their expressions by a nod of the head, I silently mutter a hundred curses upon them. Ah! how little we feel flattered by praise and honor, and all the fruits of a great victory, when in our inmost soul we are suffering a poignant grief! And how willingly would we barter all this glory to have the heart at rest! Every minute my jealousy harps upon my disgrace; and the more my mind reverts to it, the less am I able to disentangle its direful confusion. The theft of the diamonds does not surprise me; seals may be tampered

with unperceived; but she will have it that yesterday I presented the gift to her personally, and this is what puzzles me most cruelly. Nature sometimes produces resemblances, of which some impostors have availed themselves to deceive; but it is preposterous that, under such a semblance, a man should pass himself off as a husband: and in such a case there are a thousand differences which a wife can easily detect. The wonderful effects of Thessalian magic have at all times been extolled; but those famous stories, everywhere related of it, have always passed with me for idle tales; it would be a hard fate indeed, that I, fresh from a complete victory, should be compelled to believe them at the cost of my own honor.[27] I will once more interrogate her upon this vexatious mystery, and find out if it be not some idle fancy that has imposed upon her disordered senses. Grant, O righteous heavens, that this thought may prove true, and that, for my happiness, she may have lost her senses!

SCENE II.—MERCURY. AMPHITRYON.

MERC. (*On the balcony of Amphitryon's house, without being seen or heard by him.*) Since love offers me no pleasures here, I will make myself some of a different nature; and enliven my dull leisure by putting Amphitryon out of all patience. This may not be very charitable in a god; but I shall not trouble myself much about that; I find, by my star, that I am somewhat disposed to malice.[28]

AMPH. How comes it that at this hour the door is closed?

MERC. Hullo! gently. Who knocks?

AMPH. (*Not seeing Mercury.*) I.

MERC. Who is I?

AMPH. (*Perceiving Mercury whom he takes for Sosia.*) Ah! open!

MERC. Open, indeed! And who may you be, to make such an uproar, and to speak in this strain?

AMPH. What! do not you know me?

MERC. No, and have no wish to.

AMPH. (*Aside.*) Is everyone losing his senses to-day? Has the distemper spread? Sosia! hullo, Sosia!

MERC. Well? Sosia, yes, that is my name; are you afraid of my forgetting it?

AMPH. Do you see me clearly?

MERC. Clearly enough. What can possess your arm to make so great a noise? What do you want down there?

AMPH. I, you hangdog! what do I want?

MERC. What do you not want then? speak, if you would have me understand you.

AMPH. Wait, you wretch! I will come up there with a stick to make you understand, and to teach you properly to dare speak to me in this manner.

MERC. Gently! If you make the slightest attempt at disturbance, I shall send from this some messengers which you will not like.

AMPH. Oh, heavens! has such insolence ever been heard of? Can one conceive it from a servant—from a beggar!

MERC. Well, what is the matter? Have you quite summed me up? Have you stared enough at me? How wide he opens his eyes! how wild he looks! If looks could bite, he would have torn me to shreds ere now.

AMPH. I tremble at what you are bringing upon yourself with all these impudent remarks.

What a terrible storm you are brewing for yourself! What a hurricane of blows will descend upon your back!

MERC. Look here, friend, if you do not make yourself scarce from this place you may come in for some knocking about.

AMPH. Ah! you shall know to your cost, you scoundrel, what it is for a servant to insult his master.

MERC. You, my master!

AMPH. Yes, scoundrel; dare you deny me?

MERC. I recognize no other master but Amphitryon.

AMPH. And who, except myself, can this Amphitryon be?

MERC. Amphitryon!

AMPH. No doubt.

MERC. What illusion is this! Tell me, in what honest tavern have you been muddling your brain?

AMPH. What! again?

MERC. Was the wine of the right sort?

AMPH. O heavens!

MERC. Was it old or new?

AMPH. What insults!

MERC. New is apt to get into one's head, if drunk without water.

AMPH. Ah! certainly, I shall tear out that tongue of yours.

MERC. Pass on, my good friend; believe me that no one here will listen to you. I have some respect for wine. Go on, get you away, and leave Amphitryon to the pleasures which he is enjoying.

AMPH. What! is Amphitryon inside there?

MERC. Indeed he is; he himself, covered with the laurels of a single victory, is with the fair Alcmena, tasting the sweets of a charming interview. They are indulging in the pleasures of a reconciliation, after a rather whimsical love-tiff. You had better beware how you disturb their sweet privacy, unless you wish him to punish you for your excessive rashness.

SCENE III.—AMPHITRYON (*Alone*).

Ah! how strangely he has shocked my soul! and how cruelly disturbed my mind! And if matters stand as this wretch says, to what condition do I see my honor and affection reduced? Upon what am I to resolve? Am I to make it public or to keep it secret? And ought I, in my anger, to lock the dishonor of my house in my own breast, or spread it abroad? What! is there any need of consideration in so gross an insult? I have nothing to expect, and nothing to compromise; and all my uneasiness only ought to tend to my revenge.

SCENE IV.—AMPHITRYON, SOSIA, NAUCRATES, AND POLIDAS (*at the farther part of the stage*).

SOS. (*To Amphitryon.*) Sir, with all my diligence, all that I have been able to do is to bring you these gentlemen here.

AMPH. Ah, you are here!

SOS. Sir?

AMPH. Insolent, bold fellow!

Sos. What now?

Amph. I shall teach you to treat me thus.

Sos. What is the matter? what ails you?

Amph. (*Drawing his sword.*) What ails me, wretch?

Sos. (*To Naucrates and Polidas.*) Help, gentlemen! please come quickly.

Nau. (*To Amphitryon.*) Oh, pray stop!

Sos. What have I done?

Amph. You ask me that, you rogue? (*To Naucrates.*) No, let me satisfy my just anger.

Sos. When they hang a fellow, they at least tell him why they do it.

Nau. (*To Amphitryon.*) Please to tell us what his crime is.

Sos. Yes, gentlemen, please to insist upon that.

Amph. How! he just now had the audacity to shut the door in my face, and to add threats to a thousand insolent expressions! (*Wishing to strike him.*) Ah! you scoundrel!

Sos. (*Dropping on his knees.*) I am dead.

Nau. (*To Amphitryon.*) Calm this passion.

Sos. Gentlemen!

Pol. (*To Sosia.*) What is it?

Sos. Has he struck me?

Amph. No; he must have his deserts for the language he made free with just now.

Sos. How could that have been, when I was elsewhere occupied by your orders? These gentlemen here can bear witness that I have just invited them to dine with you.

Nau. It is true that he brought us this message, and would not leave us.

Amph. Who gave you that order?

Sos. You.

Amph. And when?

Sos. After your reconciliation. Amidst the transports of a soul delighted at having appeased Alcmena's anger. (*Sosia gets up.*)

Amph. O Heaven! every instant, every step, adds something to my cruel martyrdom; and, in this fatal confusion, I no longer know what to believe or what to say.

Nau. All that he has just related to us, of what happened at your house, surpasses the natural so much, that before doing anything, and before flying into a passion, you ought to clear up the whole of this adventure.

Amph. Come; you may assist my efforts; and Heaven brings you opportunely hither. Let us see what fortune may attend me to-day; let us clear up this mystery, and know our fate. Alas! I burn to learn it, and I dread it more than death.[29] (*Amphitryon knocks at the door of his house.*)

SCENE V. — Jupiter, Amphitryon, Naucrates, Polidas, Sosia.

Jup. What is this noise that obliges me to come down? And who knocks as if he were the master where I am?

Amph. Just gods! what do I see?

Nau. Heaven! what prodigy is this? What! two Amphitryons are here produced before us!

Amph. (*Aside.*) My senses are struck dumb! Alas, I can no longer bear it, the adventure is at an end; my fate is clear enough, and what I behold tells me everything.

Nau. The more closely I view them, the more I find that they are like each other in everything.

Sos. (*Crossing to the side of Jupiter.*) Gentlemen, this is the true one; the other is an impostor who deserves chastisement.

Pol. Certainly, this wonderful resemblance keeps my judgment in suspense.

Amph. We have been deceived too much by an execrable scoundrel; I must break the spell with this steel.

Nau. (*To Amphitryon, who has drawn his sword.*) Stay!

Amph. Let me alone!

Nau. Ye gods! what would you do?

Amph. Punish the vile deceptions of an impostor!

Jup. Gently, gently! There is very little need of passion; and when a man bursts out in such a manner, it leads us to suspect the goodness of his reasons.

Sos. Yes, it is a magician, who has a talisman[30] about him to resemble the masters of houses.

Amph. (*To Sosia.*) I shall let you feel, for your share, a thousand blows for this abusive language.

Sos. My master is a man of courage, and he will not allow his people to be beaten.

Amph. Let me satiate my fury and wash out my affront in this villain's blood.

Nau. (*Stopping Amphitryon.*) We shall not suffer this strange combat of Amphitryon against himself.

Amph. What! does my honor receive this treatment from you! and do my friends embrace the cause of a rogue! Far from being the first to take up my revenge, they themselves prove an obstacle to my resentment!

Nau. What would you have us resolve at this sight, when between two Amphitryons all our friendship is in suspense? Should we now show our zeal to you, we fear making a mistake, and not recognizing you. We see full well in you the image of Amphitryon, the glorious support of the Thebans' welfare; but we also see the same image in him, nor are we able to judge who is the real one. What we have to do is not doubtful, and the impostor ought to die by our hands; but this perfect resemblance conceals him between you two; and it is too hazardous a stroke to undertake without being certain. Let us ascertain gently on which side the imposture can be; and the moment we have disentangled the adventure, you will have no need to tell us our duty.

Jup. Yes, you are right, and this resemblance authorizes you to doubt about both of us. I am not offended at seeing you wavering thus; I am more reasonable, and can make allowances for you. The eye can detect no difference between us, and I see that one can easily be mistaken. You do not see me show my anger, nor draw by sword; that is a bad method of clearing up this mystery, and I can find one more gentle and more certain. One of us is Amphitryon, and both of us may seem so to your eyes. It is for me to put an end to this confusion; and I intend to make myself so well known to everyone, that at the convincing proofs of who I may be, he himself shall agree about the blood from which I spring, and not have any further occasion to say anything. In the sight of all the Thebans I will discover to you the real truth; and the matter is, undoubtedly, of sufficient importance to require the circumstance of it being cleared up before everyone. Alcmena expects from me this public testimony; her virtue, which is being outraged by the publicity of this disorder, demands justification, and I am going to take care of it. My love for her binds me to it; and I shall convene an

assembly of the noblest chiefs, for an elucidation which her honor requires. While awaiting these desirable witnesses, pray, please to honor the table to which Sosia has invited you.

Sos. I was not mistaken, gentlemen; this word puts an end to all irresolution; the real Amphitryon is the Amphitryon who gives dinners.[31]

Amph. O heavens! can I see myself humiliated much lower? What! must I suffer the martyrdom of listening to all that this impostor has just said to my face, and have my hands tied, whilst his discourse drives me furious!

Nau. (*To Amphitryon.*) You complain wrongly. Allow us to await the elucidation which shall render resentments seasonable. I do not know whether he imposes upon us; but he speaks as if he had right on his side.

Amph. Go, weak friends, and flatter the imposture. Thebes has other friends, different from you; and I am going to find some who, sharing the insult done to me, will know how to lend their hand to avenge my just anger.

Jup. Well, I await them, and I shall know how to decide the quarrel in their presence.

Amph. Scoundrel, you think perhaps to escape by these means; but nothing shall shield you from my revenge.

Jup. I shall not condescend to answer this insulting language at present; and by-and-by I shall be able to confound this rage with two words.

Amph. Not Heaven, not Heaven itself, shall shield you from it; and I shall dog your footsteps even unto hell.

Jup. There will be no need of that; and you shall soon see that I will not fly.

Amph. (*Aside.*) Come, let us, before he gets out with them, make haste to assemble such friends as will second my vengeance, and who will come to my house to lend me assistance to pierce him with a thousand wounds.

SCENE VI.—Jupiter, Naucrates, Polidas, Sosia.

Jup. No ceremony, I beseech you; let us go quickly within doors.

Nau. Certainly, the whole of this adventure puzzles the senses and the reason.

Sos. A truce, gentlemen, to all your surprises; and joyfully sit down to feast till morning. (*Alone.*) Now for a good feed, and to put myself in condition to relate our valiant deeds! I am itching to be at it; and I was never so hungry in my life.[32]

SCENE VII.—Mercury, Sosia.

Merc. Stop. What! you come to poke your nose in here, you impudent plate-licker!

Sos. For mercy's sake, gently!

Merc. Ah, you are at it again! I shall dust your coat for you.

Sos. Alas! brave and generous I, compose yourself, I beg of you. Sosia, spare Sosia a little, and do not amuse yourself in cudgeling yourself.

Merc. Who gave you permission to call yourself by that name? Did I not expressly forbid you to do so, under penalty of a thousand blows?

Sos. It is a name we both may bear at the same time, under the same master. I am known for Sosia everywhere; I allow that you should be he, allow that I may be he also. Let us leave it to the two Amphitryons to display their jealousies, and, amidst their contentions, let us make the two Sosias live in peace.

Merc. No, one is quite enough; and I am obstinate in allowing no dividing.

Sos. You shall have the precedence over me; I shall be the younger, and you the elder.

Merc. No! a brother is troublesome, and is not to my taste; and I wish to be an only son.

Sos. O barbarous and tyrannical heart! Allow me at least to be your shadow.

Merc. Nothing of the kind.

Sos. Let your soul humanize itself with a little pity! Suffer me to be near you in that capacity; I shall be such a submissive shadow everywhere, that you shall be satisfied with me.

Merc. No quarter; the decree is immutable. If you again have the audacity to enter there, a thousand blows shall be the consequence.

Sos. Alack! poor Sosia, to what cruel disgrace are you reduced!

Merc. What! your lips still take the liberty of giving yourself a name which I forbid!

Sos. No, I was not hearing myself; and I was speaking of an old Sosia, who was formerly a relative of mine, and whom, with the greatest barbarity, they drove out at the dinner hour.

Merc. Beware of falling into that mistake, if you wish to remain among the living.

Sos. (*Aside.*) How I would thrash you if I had the courage, for your too inflated pride, you double son of a strumpet!

Merc. What are you saying?

Sos. Nothing.

Merc. You are, I believe, muttering something to yourself.

Sos. Ask anyone; I did not so much as breathe.

Merc. Certain words about the son of a strumpet have struck my ear, nothing is more certain.

Sos. It must be some parrot awakened by the beautiful weather.

Merc. Farewell! If your back should itch, this is the spot where I reside.

Sos. (*Alone.*) O heavens! the cursedest hour to be turned out of doors is the dinner hour. Come, let us submit to fate in our affliction. Let us to-day follow blind caprice, and by a proper union, join the unfortunate Sosia to the unfortunate Amphitryon. I perceive him coming in good company.[33]

SCENE VIII.—Amphitryon, Argatiphontidas, Pausicles, Sosia (*in a corner of the stage, without being seen*).

Amph. (*To several other officers who accompany him.*) Stay here, gentlemen: follow us

from a little distance, and do not all come forward. I pray you, until there is need for it.

PAUS. I understand that this blow must touch you to the very heart.

AMPH. My grief, alas! is poignant at all points, and I suffer in my affection, as much as in my honor.

PAUS. If this resemblance is such as is said, Alcmena, without being to blame . . .

AMPH. Ah! in the matter in question, a simple error becomes a real crime, and against its will, innocence perishes in it. Such errors, look at them in whatever light you will, touch us in the most delicate parts; and reason often pardons them, when honor and love cannot do so.

ARGAT. I do not perplex my thoughts about that; but I hate your gentlemen for their shameful delay; and that is a proceeding which wounds me to the quick, and of which people who have their hearts in the right place will never approve. When anyone employs us, we should headforemost throw ourselves into his concerns. Argatiphontidas is not for compromising matters. It does not become men of honor to listen to the arguments of a friend's adversary; one should listen only to revenge at such times. Such a proceeding does not suit me; and one should begin always in those quarrels by running a man through the body, without much ado. Yes, you shall see, whatever happens, that Argatiphontidas goes straight to the point: and I must crave as a particular favor that the scoundrel shall die by no other hand than mine.

AMPH. Come on.

SOS. (*To Amphitryon.*) I come, sir, to undergo on both knees the just punishment of a cursed insolence. Strike, beat, thrash, overwhelm me with blows. Kill me in your anger, you will do well, I deserve it; and I shall not say a word against you.

AMPH. Get up. What are they doing?

SOS. I have been turned away without ceremony; and thinking to eat and be merry like them, I did not imagine that, in fact, I was waiting there to give myself a beating. Yes, the other I, servant to the other you, has played the very devil with me again. The same harsh destiny seems to pursue us both at present, sir; and, in short, they have un-Sosiad me as they un-Amphitryon'd you.[34]

AMPH. Follow me.

SOS. Is it not better to see if anybody is coming?

SCENE IX. — CLEANTHIS, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLES, SOSIA.

CLE. O Heaven!

AMPH. What scares you so? What is the fear with which I inspire you?

CLE. Lord-a-mercy! you are up there, and yet I see you here!

NAU. Do not be in a hurry; here he comes to give the wished-for explanation before us all, and which, if we may believe what he has just said about it, shall at once dispel your trouble and care.

SCENE X.—MERCURY, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

MERC. Yes, you all shall see him; and know beforehand that it is the great master of the gods, whom, under the beloved features of this resemblance, Alcmena has caused to descend hither from the heavens. And as for me, I am Mercury, who, not knowing what to do, has thrashed more or less him whose form I have assumed: but now he may comfort himself; for the blows of a god confer honor upon him who receives them.

SOS. Upon my word, Mister God, I am your servant; but I could have dispensed with your courtesy.

MERC. I henceforth give him leave to be Sosia. I am tired of wearing such an ugly face, and I am going to the skies to wash it off entirely with ambrosia. (*Mercury ascends to heaven.*)

SOS. May Heaven forever deprive you of the fancy of coming near me again! Your fury against me has been too inveterate; and never in my life did I see a god who was more of a devil than you.

SCENE XI.—JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. (*Announced by the noise of thunder, armed with his thunder-bolt, in a cloud, on his eagle.*) Behold, Amphitryon, who has imposed upon you; and see Jupiter appear in his own features. By these signs you may easily recognize him; and it is sufficient, I think, to reinstate your heart in the condition in which it ought to be, and to restore peace and happiness in your family. My name, which the whole world incessantly worships, quells in this case all scandal that might be spread. A share with Jupiter has nothing dishonorable in it, and doubtless, it can be only glorious to find one's self the rival of the sovereign of the gods. I see no reason in it that your love should murmur, and it is I, god as I am, who, in this adventure, should be jealous. Alcmena is wholly yours, whatever pains may be taken; and it must be very gratifying to your love to see that there is no other way of pleasing her than to assume the appearance of her husband; that even Jupiter, adorned by his immortal glory, could not by himself conquer her fidelity; and that what she granted him has, by her ardent heart, been granted only to you.[35]

SOS. My lord, Jupiter knows how to gild the pill.

JUP. Banish, therefore, your gloomy and heartfelt grief, and restore its wonted calm to the ardor which consumes you. In your house shall be born a son, who, under the name of Hercules, shall fill the vast universe with his exploits. A glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, shall prove to every one that I am your support; I shall make your destiny the envy of the whole world. You may safely flatter yourself with these promised hopes. It is a crime to doubt them: the words of Jupiter are the decrees of fate. (*He vanishes in the clouds.*)

NAU. Certainly, I am enraptured at these brilliant marks . . .

SOS. Gentlemen, will you please to follow my opinion? Embark not in these pretty

congratulations: it is a bad investment; and pretty phrases are embarrassing on either side, in such a compliment. The great god Jupiter has done us much honor, and, no doubt, his goodness toward us is unequaled; he promises the certain felicity of a glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, and that in our house shall be born a very mighty son. Nothing could be better than all this. But, in short, a truce to speeches, and let everyone retire in peace. It is always best in these matters to say nothing.

NOTES

[1] This part was played by the author himself. In the inventory given by M. Soulié, and so often quoted, Molière's dress, in the character of Sosia, consists of "the sleeves and the lower part of the theatrical classical cuirass (*tonnelet*) of green taffeta, with a small lace of fine silver, a chemisette of the same taffeta, two leggings of red satin, a pair of shoes, with tags ornamented with silver lace, with a silk stocking of a peculiar kind of light green color (*Céladon*), the festoons, the belt and a skirt, and a cap, embroidered with fine gold and silver."

[2] Molière got the primary idea of this Prologue from Plautus's *Amphitryon* (Act I., Scene 1), where Mercury addresses Night thus: "Go on, Night, as you've begun, and pay obedience to my father. In best style, the best of services are you performing for the best of beings; in giving this, you reap a fair return."

[3] Sosia expresses himself as a courtier of Louis XIV. Plautus's Sosia complains only of the harsh condition of a slave, but says nothing "of the honor of remaining" with the master.

[4] In Plautus's *Amphitryon*, Sosia is very much afraid of meeting someone, and of being beaten. Still, he seems in no hurry to arrive, for he utters a soliloquy of about two hundred lines. Moliere makes Sosia perceive the house, and thus his fear vanishes.

[5] The scene in which Sosia addresses the lantern is an imitation of a scene in the fifth fable of the third night of the *Piacevoli Notti* of Straparola; with this difference, that, in the Italian tale, the servant who has killed the bull with the golden horns, in order to give those horns to his mistress, hangs his clothes upon a branch of a tree, and then addresses them in an explanatory speech, which he intends afterward to deliver to his master, who has confided the bull to his guard.

[6] Pterelas did not live in the time of Amphitryon, but was the son of Taphius, a son of a niece of Alcæus, the father of Amphitryon. Plautus and Molière have made the same mistake.

[7] Telebos was the capital of the island of Taphe, not far from Ithaca, on the coast of Acarnania.

[8] Plautus's Sosia gives a serious and detailed narrative of the battle; Molière's preserves the real comedy tone.

[9] Compare Nick Bottom in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (Act III., Scene 1), saying, "I will sing that they shall hear I am not afraid."

[10] This dialogue is imitated from Plautus, except Sosia's remark about the fellow having no love for music.

[11] Nearly the whole of this lively dialogue is partly imitated from Plautus.

[12] This dialogue is again followed from Plautus.

[13] According to Riley, Plautus is here guilty of an anachronism; for the Portus Persicus, which was on the coast of Eubœa, was so called from the Persian fleet lying there on the occasion of the expedition to Greece, many ages after the time of Amphitryon.

[14] Among the ancients, marking with a red-hot iron upon the shoulder was unknown as a public punishment. In Plautus, Sosia says that he has been whipped.

[15] In Plautus, Amphitryon receives a "golden goblet" for his share, which has become almost historical, because historians have mentioned it and described its form.

[16] Arms were unknown to the ancients, for heraldry came in only with chivalry. But the ancients used signet rings upon which was engraved some peculiar sign.

[17] This is also taken from Plautus; only Mercury speaks there of "an earthen pot," and not of a bottle.

[18] The Alcmena of Plautus utters sentiments more worthy of a Roman matron. This is what she says of her husband (Act II., Scene 2): "This, at least, makes me happy, that he has conquered the foe, and has returned home laden with glory. Let him be absent, if only with fame acquired he betakes himself home. I shall bear and ever endure his absence with mind resolved and steadfast; if only this reward is granted me that my husband shall be hailed the conqueror in the warfare, sufficient for myself will I deem it. Valor is the best reward; valor assuredly surpasses all things: liberty, safety, life, property and parents, country, too, and children, by it are defended and preserved. Valor comprises everything in itself: all blessings attend him in whose possession is valor."

[19] In Plautus, Sosia, when interrogated by Amphitryon, who has been beating him, replies also, "I myself, who am now at home, beat me myself."

[20] In Plautus (Act II., Scene 2) Sosia says: "You have brought forth another Amphitryon, I have brought forth another Sosia; now, if the goblet has brought forth a goblet, we have all produced our doubles."

[21] In Plautus, when the real Amphitryon comes back, Alcmena expresses her astonishment at his unexpected return; but when her husband loads her with reproaches, she replies, like a true Roman matron, "I have brought you that which is called a dowry: I do not deem the same my dowry; but chastity, and modesty, and subdued desires, fear of the gods, and love of my parents, and concord with my kindred; to be obedient to yourself, and bounteous to the good, ready to aid the upright." In Molière, Alcmena is the young, loving Frenchwoman.

[22] This scene, which is really the principal one of the comedy, is wholly taken from Plautus.

[23] These two lines are also found, with some slight alteration, in the sixth scene of the second act of *Don Garcia of Navarre*.

[24] In Plautus, the real Amphitryon threatens his wife with a divorce, and when Jupiter appears, under his semblance, and tries to make peace with Alcmena, she says (Act III., Scene 2):

> ALC. By my virtue have I rendered these accusations vain. Since, then, I eschew conduct that's unchaste, I would wish to avoid imputations of unchastity. Fare you well, keep your own property to yourself, return me mine. Do you order any maids to be my attendants?
>
> JUP. Are you in your senses?
>
> ALC. If you don't order them, let me go alone; chastity shall I take as my attendant. (*Going.*)
>
> JUP. Stay; at your desire, I'll give my oath that I believe my wife to be chaste. If in that I deceive you, then thee, supreme Jupiter, do I entreat that thou wilt ever be angered against Amphitryon.
>
> ALC. Oh! rather may he prove propitious!

[25] The original has, *C'est pour ton nez, vraiment!* ("It is for your nose, really.")

[26] The original has *tuante amitié*: I do not think that the word *tuante*, killing, is often used in this way in French.

[27] The Amphitryon of Plautus thinks his "doubleganger" to be a magician, a sorcerer, an enchanter; but Molière's hero does not believe anything of the kind; he is, therefore, in a much greater perplexity, and his situation is much more comical.

[28] Mercury, in astrology, "signifieth subtill men, ingenious, inconstant; rymers, poets, advocates, orators, phylosophers, arithmeticians and busie fellowes."

[29] Plautus, who has this scene, also brings upon the stage only one witness—the pilot Blepharo; Molière introduces here two, and afterward, in the eighth scene, two fresh witnesses.

[30] The original has *un caractère*.

[31] This last saying is even now used as a proverb.

[32] From this to the end of the comedy, *Amphitryon* belongs entirely to Molière.

[33] This scene is taken from Rotrou's *Les deux Sosies*.

[34] Plautus is full of similar plays on words. For example, in *Trinummus; the Three Pieces of Money*, Act IV., Scene 2, the Sharper says to Charmides, an Athenian merchant, and whom he does not believe to be "his own self," "therefore, in such manner as you Charmidised yourself, do you again un-Charmidise yourself."

[35] If in this play there had been the slightest allusion to the love of Louis XIV. for Madame de Montespan, Molière would certainly not have slipped in this compliment to her husband.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS

AMPHITRYON

		After	
AMPHITRYON		Maurice Leloir	5
TITLE OF 1668		" "	7
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ		" "	18
NIGHT AND MERCURY	Prologue	" "	19
NIGHT AND MERCURY	Prologue	Edm. Hédouin *Facing*	20
NIGHT AND MERCURY	Prologue	Maurice Leloir	21
MERCURY AND SOSIA	Act I, Scene II	" "	23
CLEANTHIS AND MERCURY	Act I, Scene IV	" "	31
ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS AND SOSIA	Act II, Scene II	" "	33
CLEANTHIS AND SOSIA	Act II, Scene III	" " *Facing*	40
JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS AND SOSIA	Act II, Scene VI	Edm. Hédouin *Facing*	44
JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS AND SOSIA	Act II, Scene IV	Maurice Leloir	45
JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA AND THE OFFICERS	Act III, Scene XI	" "	47
AMPHITRYON, SOSIA AND THE OFFICERS	Act III, Scene XI	" "	56

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